The Horus Heresy

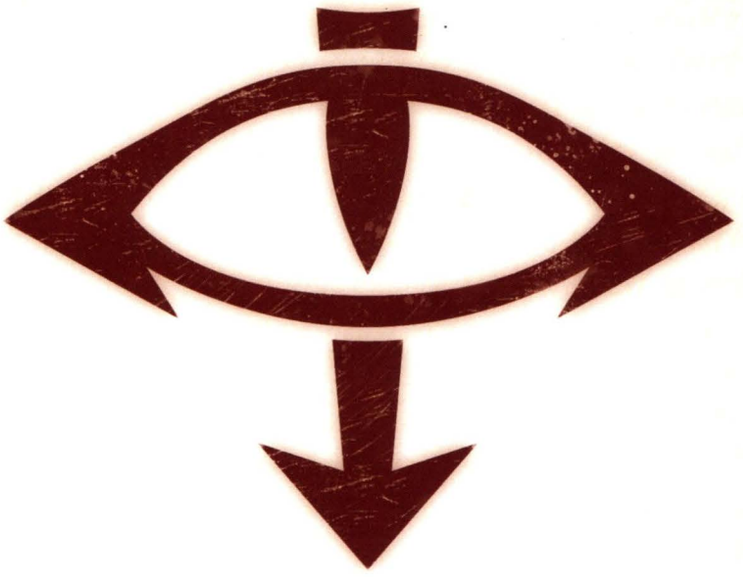
Book Six

Retribution

THE TIDE OF WAR DROWNS HUMANITY IN BLOOD,
THE WARP ROILS, AND TERRORS BREED IN THE SHADOWS

THE HORUS HERESY®

BOOK SIX



RETRIBUTION

A SUPPLEMENT FOR WARHAMMER 40,000

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"It is an inviolable truth that humanity's ability to destroy will always outstrip its ability to create, it is our curse and our salvation combined, our end when it comes, will be writ by our own bloody hand."
The Unspeakable King

Preface

Retribution is that most ancient of laws, that first order of primordial justice; that an eye be claimed for an eye, a life for a life, one atrocity heaped upon another in relentless, bloody arithmetic. There are those who would say it was bred in Mankind's bones, that it is a principle that came before our most distant ancestors even had words to express its measure. Vengeance is in our nature and it will not be denied.

So has it ever been with humanity, so it was with those who sprung from humanity's stock—so it was with the Space Marines. As the aftershocks of the great betrayal and the tragedy of Isstvan were joined with the blows of fresh massacre and perfidy at Calth and Phall and Mars, and in time even these fell echoes were drowned out by the roar of a war that tore like a hurricane across the galaxy, a war in which every life lost was but a drop of blood in a torrent the likes of which had never been before seen. Every life lost cried out for vengeance, for retribution. Lost in this red cataract were great battles and petty skirmishes without number, of which already only the greatest now remain to the minds of most who lived through those dark years; the apocalypse of Beta-Garmon, the great Titandeath, the shock of the Wolf Cull, but forgotten and unknown beside these battles whose infamy will last a thousand years lie untold others, every tragedy crying out for more blood in its turn.

It was an immensity of war the human mind cannot comprehend, and yet even within this tumult, there were wars fought that were never meant to be known. On those fields fought shades of battle whose origins and goals were shrouded, even as their fellows fought in bold panoply declaring either Emperor or Warmaster as their cause. Some were little more than renegades and marauders, turncoats, by-blows; others, the shattered remnants of legions and armies spent like tears, the dead yet alive. Within these shadow wars they moved, and with them those who carried the secret writ of great powers, servants of the Sigillite and disciples of the Eye alike, working ruin in their wake.

It was retribution that linked them all—those who sought it and those upon whom the blade would fall in payment for their sins; whether it was vengeance for fallen brothers, for a fallen father, a shattered oath, or simply for the murdered dream of unity, in an Age of Darkness, when all else was lost, retribution was all that was left.

I saw, with eyes then young, and this is my testament. I was there when Tallarn burned and Keoptis drowned in oceans of blood. I witnessed the skies of Terra riven with lightning and shadow on the day the Warmaster came and hell followed with him. I heard the funeral bell toll for the Emperor of Humanity and wept.

I remember.

The Wars Of Retribution

"As the brittle blade will shatter before it bends, so too will the brittle soul break before it turns."

The Seven Admonitions of Terra

AGE OF BETRAYAL

It was 007.M31, and the Age of Darkness had descended upon the Imperium.

The veil of night had fallen and it would not be lifted within the lifetime of any condemned by the fates to live through it. At Isstvan III, Warmaster Horus had purged four entire Legions of those elements who could not be trusted to follow him and his Traitor brothers into rebellion against their father-Emperor. Soon after, the terrible extent of the betrayal was revealed at Isstvan V, where three more Legions demonstrated their loyalty to Horus and three others were all but annihilated.

As the fires of war caught, entire worlds burned. The Imperial Fists were savaged at Phall, while the Ultramarines were betrayed at Calth and their Five Hundred Worlds plunged into a sea of blood by the combined war hosts of the Word Bearers and the World Eaters. Of the remaining Legions, little was known of the fate of the Blood Angels, White Scars and Dark Angels, for the artifice of the Warmaster and his agents had ensured they were scattered far and wide by the time his treachery was revealed. For the first years of the Horus Heresy, they were feared lost at best, and turned at worst.

Between Isstvan in 006.M31 and the casting back of the Shadow Crusade in 009.M31, the Imperium knew anarchy, uncertainty and bloodshed on a scale never before witnessed. Though still more destruction was to come before the end, this was a period of unprecedented confusion and chaos. Lorgar of the Word Bearers had, by the ritual offering of the Veridia star, invoked the Ruinstorm, a raging tempest that made warp travel and astrotelepathic communication across the galaxy-spanning Imperium perilous at best and impossible at worst. The Primarch Rogal Dorn of the Legiones Astartes Imperial Fists had assumed command of the defences of Terra, while the Emperor appeared to have withdrawn entirely to pursue a mission he could not confide even to his most trusted sons. The Warmaster claimed world after world in the northern Imperium, and other spheres, systems and entire sectors across the galaxy declared for the Traitors' cause. Millions-strong armies reeled in disorder as desperate pleas for aid went unheeded. A torrent of orders flooded out from Terra with no notion of whether the intended recipients would receive them, or if they had already been slain or turned to the Warmaster's cause. Entire planetary populations fled across the stars, a migratory diaspora of refugees driven beyond sanity by the horrors unleashed by the rapidly advancing Traitor armies.

Thus it proved nigh-impossible for Terra to mount a truly coordinated defence of its worlds and so sector after sector fell to the Warmaster as he advanced upon Terra. There was no single frontline that could be held and no decisive salient that could be mounted. Individual forces, from small companies to entire armies, threw themselves willingly into the crucible of war in a desperate effort to stem the inexorable tide. Never before had Mankind been divided by such conflict, and soon a thousand worlds and more were transformed into blasted war zones across which millions of erstwhile brothers-in-arms, from the humblest militia conscript to the mightiest warrior of the Legiones Astartes, clashed.

The task of recounting the triumphs and tragedies of the Age of Darkness is one that can never be completed even should the Imperium stand for ten thousand years and our Order swell in size to rival the armies of humanity. Countless battles must therefore go unrecorded by posterity, so total was the destruction wrought by and upon both sides when at last the end came. Where once the young Imperium had stood upon the cusp of an age of unity and prosperity, suddenly it stood upon the very brink of the abyss. Between the outbreak of the Horus Heresy at the Isstvan system and the casting back of the Shadow Crusade from Ultramar, a period of around three years, all-consuming war came to Calth, the Coronid Deeps, Baztel, Anvillus, Paramar, Beta-Garmon, Tallarn and a hundred other worlds, many of them rendered to blackened wastes by the close of the Age of Darkness.

Trials and Tribulations

Warriors whose names had been carved in glory into a thousand triumphal memorials would come to be reviled by the multitudes, their names turned into bywords for fratricide and atrocity. Warriors whose names had never been known were at a stroke propelled to such heights that they held the fate of entire worlds in their hands. The task of redacting the names and deeds of the former and enshrining those of the latter is one that has already begun, but which is unlikely to be completed within the span of mortal years.

Galaxy of War

For every world that burned in planet-wide conflagration, innumerable smaller scale, but equally bitter wars were fought, often far away from any war zone that might be considered a front line. At the opening of the Horus Heresy, many of the Legions had been operating as large bodies under the direct command of their Primarch, but even then, many smaller contingents had been seconded to service elsewhere. As the Age of Darkness ground on, many of these mighty hosts became fragmented and while individual Primarchs often remained in direct command of the core of their Legions, ever more sub-commands were despatched across the galaxy in pursuit of either Traitor or Loyalist goals. As the Ruinstorm cut yet more regions off from the greater Imperium, many such detachments were turned by circumstance into independent commands in all but name, their leaders vested with what amounted to total authority to conduct their own wars in whatever manner they deemed most appropriate.

Across the galaxy, independent Legiones Astartes forces varying in scale from sub-company to battalion or chapter conducted countless high intensity operations. Many were surgical strikes against targets of vital strategic worth – at Grendel's World for example, a mixed force of around three hundred Night Lords and Emperor's Children Legionaries destroyed the Astropathic relay station established there a decade earlier to serve the 78th Expeditionary Fleet as it pressed into the regions beyond. Whether or not it was their intent, the destruction of the relay station caused all contact with the 78th to be cut for many years. The fleet's high commander, Lord-Captain Morrachi of the Legiones Astartes Blood Angels, did not therefore learn of the outbreak of the Horus Heresy until after the event and was thus unable to intervene at a vital juncture in history.

Many operations were specifically targeted attacks against key enemy leaders or individuals holding the balance of power, and many of these amounted to little more than callous murders and brutal assassinations. Far-ranging Legiones Astartes kill teams or larger strike forces were capable of reaching and striking against targets more conventional Legion forces could not engage, and so no commander or high administrator was guaranteed safe from the executioner's axe. Though reliable accounts of most such attacks are few and far between, the assassination of the Magister-Militaris of Constantinium serves as something of an exception, as was no doubt intended when it was conducted. Magister Karpath of Constantinium had declared the entire Viridis sector for the Warmaster in mid 007.M31 and expended prodigious resources to fortify his capital, claiming that its walls

would be built every bit as strong and tall as those of Terra and that no attacker would ever penetrate them. The Magister-Militaris was made a fool and a liar when within a year a strike force of Dark Angels, White Scars and Iron Warriors Legionaries conducted a *coups-de-grace* operation which penetrated straight into the heart of his massively fortified palace. Karpath was executed kneeling at the foot of his own throne before his entire court in what could only have been intended as an incontrovertible message to all who would turn against Terra. The presence of the Iron Warriors element in this force however remains unresolved and unexplainable, as do so many similar accounts of the unseen wars of the Age of Darkness.

Unheeded Heroes

Some Loyalist forces pledged themselves to defend individual worlds against the depredations of the Traitors, in particular if they found themselves stranded by the coming of the Ruinstorm and unable to penetrate its depths. History can never make a full accounting of the number of such actions fought by stoic and self-sacrificing Loyalists far from the main war zones; indeed, only they and possibly those they protected will ever know of the sacrifices made. Recently surfaced is a rare account of such an action – the Defence of Nagathar, where several scattered Legiones Astartes forces sought refuge in a pocket of relative calm against the suddenly tempestuous Warp. Not all of these groups were loyal to Terra though, for one belonged to the Legiones Astartes Word Bearers and was somehow able to navigate the surrounding warp routes and avoid the horrendous calamities that had befallen so many other vessels attempting to do so. Nagathar itself remained untouched as the storms swallowed nearby worlds, but the Word Bearers sought to prey upon its scattered settlements and enslave its peoples, and it was only the efforts of the Loyalists of the Imperial Fists and Dark Angels that saved a million souls from being sacrificed by the sons of Lorgar for an end that no sane man would attempt to perceive.

Other Legiones Astartes ranged for thousands of light years across the galaxy, braving the perils of the storm-wracked Warp in an effort to engage the enemy wherever they were to be found. Of this type of action there exist far more examples than others, but many are known to us only by hearsay alone. The names of some of these groups appear in accounts of battles the length

and breadth of the galaxy, making it nigh-impossible for historators to compile a true or complete accounting of their deeds. One name that is known however is Roscius, an Assault-Captain of the Legiones Astartes Ultramarines who had been assigned pathfinder duties ahead of the doomed 933rd Expeditionary Fleet by his Primarch soon after Roboute Guilliman assumed command of the Legion—Assault-Captain Roscius is not listed amongst those officers ordered to muster at the Calth Conjunction.

Several months after the outset of the Shadow Crusade against Ultramar, Roscius' assault company boarded and captured a strike cruiser of the Legiones Astartes Sons of Horus at Plutol, a segmentum away from Ultramar. Six weeks later, that cruiser ambushed and crippled a Death Guard heavy transport at Terrax out-system and a month after that conducted a lightning strike against a Traitor Mechanicum void fuelling station at Yspotua. The cruiser does not appear in any extant historical archives for the next year, but resurfaces when it is reported to have led a ragged flotilla of vessels against Traitor supply lines at Toreus, 3,000 light years away, where Assault-Captain Roscius commanded a force of over 3,000 Legionaries drawn from as many as four different Legions. The last engagement where Roscius is known to have commanded was the Duthovan Blockade, conducted against Traitor forces stranded on Duthovan by the coming of the Ruinstorm, a battle few of either side survived.

Lorgar's invocation of the Ruinstorm had cut the galaxy asunder, and so most Legiones Astartes forces not operating under the personal command of their Primarch were often required to act under their own cognisance for extended periods, in many cases for the entirety of the Horus Heresy and long after. The Ruinstorm did not serve only to stymie the coordination of far-flung armies, but had a more unsettling effect born of the dark powers underpinning the entire conflict. Even though it existed primarily in the other-dimension of warp space, the Ruinstorm bled through into realspace in many regions, the raw stuff of the Immaterium tainting the void itself with coiling ætheric tendrils and kaleidoscopes of unseen colours. From the surface of many worlds, the stars appeared to have been swallowed by the void or the night skies were transformed into a canvas upon which were rendered scenes from the hells of ancient superstitious texts. On the worst afflicted worlds, nightmares made flesh walked the lands, the veil between reality and the Immaterium stretched beyond breaking point and the infernal denizens first encountered by the Ultramarines at Calth —named by some '*Daemons*'— spewing forth. Thus, in many cases, it was the smaller, detached Legiones Astartes forces that first encountered such abominations as they fought far from the key war zones, prosecuting isolated wars against creatures that defied all sanity and had no place in the secular Imperium the Great Crusade had founded upon the bedrock of Imperial Truth.

By 010.M31, the Imperium that had been stood no more. The fires of the Horus Heresy were consuming hundreds of systems in all-out war, while innumerable conflicts burned in the darkness far beyond the central war zones.

The Shadow Wars of the Age of Darkness

Those who would look back upon the Age of Darkness and attempt to compile anything resembling a coherent accounting of its myriad wars, campaigns and battles know they are faced with an impossible task. For every central battle —Calth, Tallarn, Mars, Yarrant and Terra itself— there must have been a thousand smaller engagements. Wherever a scribe might care to look, there they will discover some sign that blood was shed upon the ground for the Traitor or Loyalist cause. Over time, these unhallowed battles reveal themselves to us through the scattered and fragmented accounts of witnesses, survivors and in some small number of cases, participants. Savant-historators refer to these many conflicts as '*shadow wars*'.

The shadow wars were fought not by conventional Legiones Astartes fighting units—companies, battalions and chapters, as part of a distinct and unbroken chain of command from Primarch all the way down to sergeant. Instead, they fought entirely apart from any structured authority or grand strategy. There was no single template for these forces and they are referred to in various accounts by a range of terms including '*irregular*', '*non-doctrinal*' or simply '*orphaned*'.

The Knights-Errant

In the decades that have passed since the culmination of the Horus Heresy and the outset of the period now being referred to as '*the Scouring*', tacticae-savants have identified a broad spectrum of categories into which many irregular forces can be placed. At one end of this spectrum is to be found the body of warriors coined the '*Knights-Errant*'. We know all but nothing of this mysterious group, other than it was formed at the express order of Malcador the Sigillite. The so-called '*Chosen of Malcador*' included many individuals from a wide range of backgrounds, but his Knights-Errant were all Space Marines, and many of these were the scions of the Traitor Primarchs

The Crusader Host

At the conclusion of the Unification Wars, the Legions stood upon the precipice of launching the Great Crusade, to depart the Sol System in a great many cases never to return. Before leaving at the head of the first great Expeditionary fleets, each of the Legions mustered a party of Legionaries who would remain on Terra and stand as their representatives before the Terran Council in all matters in which the Legions held a stake. In addition, they would serve as an honour guard to watch over Terra and all that the Unification Wars had won Mankind. Perhaps most importantly, they would record the names of those Legionaries who would lay down their lives conquering the great darkness beyond the light of Sol, so that no sacrifice would ever be forgotten. In accepting this honour, the Legionaries of the Crusader Host would be making an equally great sacrifice, for they would partake in none of the glory their brothers would win and all their victories would be won by proxy.

When the Warmaster's betrayal was revealed at Isstvan III, the members of the Crusader Host were as one incarcerated by the Praetorian of Terra, the Primarch Rogal Dorn. If such as Horus could turn, then who among the Host could be trusted? At length, Dorn was satisfied that those of the Host drawn from his own Legion were sound in their loyalties and he ordered them freed. Of the remainder, each is a tale in its own right. Some escaped, their fates unknown. A small number were freed on condition of their performing some great and vital task, such as service in the ranks of the Knights-Errant. The ultimate fate of many of the Crusader Host is bound up in the events of the climax of the Horus Heresy, when total war came at last to Terra, but that is a tale best accounted when at last it is time to do so.

who had refused to follow their fathers into treachery and chosen instead to renounce their Legion and serve the Imperium directly at its highest level. All cast off their Legion heraldry and wore in its stead the gunmetal grey of bare ceramite.

Little is now known of the highly secret missions the Knights-Errant undertook at the behest of the Regent of Terra throughout the Age of Darkness, for many accounts have been deliberately suppressed, events have gone unrecorded at the time or reports were simply lost in the conflagration that descended upon Terra at the culmination of the Warmaster's great betrayal. Certainly, the Knights-Errant fought alone or in small groups against key foes identified by the Sigillite and in some cases aligned their interests with those of other Legion forces, serving side by side with conventional Legiones Astartes units when deemed necessary. It is considered likely by some historators of our Order that the Knights-Errant may have played a key, albeit mysterious role in the unseen '*silent war*' that was waged between Malcador and the Primarch Rogal Dorn, for both found their interests frequently in opposition. As the Solar War gripped humanity's birth system, the interests of the Sigillite and the Primarch frequently clashed and while face to face the two remained cordial, if often coldly so, behind the scenes their agents and servants might very well have been murdering one another. Whether or not the Knights-Errant ever took up arms against Loyalist forces is unknown, but it is certain that they undertook missions that furthered the long term goals of the Regent of Terra at the expense of those of the Praetorian of Terra.

The Shattered Legions

Another form of unconventional or irregular Legiones Astartes formations were the so-called '*Shattered Legions*'—a retroactive term applied to a broad range of forces and unlikely to have been used by the warriors themselves. The Shattered Legions forces were born of the fiery crucible of the Isstvan V Dropsite Massacre, where the treachery of the second attack wave resulted in the nigh-total destruction of the Raven Guard, Salamanders and Iron Hands. Initial reports claimed the cataclysmic news that three Primarchs had fallen and that no more than seven Legionaries had escaped the slaughter, although thankfully these accounts were later proved false. Nonetheless, these three Legions ceased to exist as coherent, operational military bodies and were forced to drastically adapt their organisation and their methods in order to remain functional in any way at all. In the aftermath of the massacre, bloody, scattered groups from all three Legions coalesced across an entire sector of space, driven by the hunter-killer forces of the Sons of Horus and the Emperor's Children, the latter taking especial delight in running the survivors to ground and forcing them to bear witness to the totality of their defeat. Harried by their relentless foe, the last of these remnant forces turned at bay and fought back, following the example of Shadrak Meduson of the Iron Hands Sorrgol Clan. By sheer force of will, Meduson forged disparate elements from these three Legions into an unbreakable alloy, and for a time led a fierce-fought campaign of vengeance against the Traitors that drew on and combined the unique skills and experience of each element, and which cost the Warmaster's war effort dearly.

But it was not only the remnants of the three Legions that were betrayed at Isstvan V who fought in this manner. Across the entire Imperium and beyond, Legion elements cut off from their chains of command were forced to adapt to circumstances or else perish in the all-consuming fires of war. Some detached Loyalist forces were able to break through the Traitors' lines and join the mustering hosts of the Imperium. Others however found themselves isolated deep within enemy-held territory and too far behind enemy lines to make contact with allied forces. While many of these small forces were never heard from again and their fates go unrecorded, others determined to act on their own cognisance. Leaders of vision and character melded disparate Legion elements into highly effective forces and used them to prosecute the unseen shadow wars that raged across the galaxy, often unknown to the masters of either side of the civil war.

And neither was the formation of these Shattered Legion forces unique to those loyal to Terra. As the Age of Darkness progressed, many more found themselves acting alone, following the goals of their own leaders, and at times these goals differed from those of the chains of command that had once bound them. With the ebb and flow of war, Traitor forces too became isolated and, given the nature of certain of their leaders, many Traitor units determined to act entirely according to their own drives and desires. Some resurrected ancient resentments against erstwhile brethren now turned to blood-foes and pursued vengeance for slights of honour thought long forgotten. Others became consumed by the forces they had unleashed upon Isstvan V, shedding reason and honour and reaving across the stars as if to vindicate, or perhaps to forget, their treachery with the blood of all those they branded enemy.

The Hidden Hand of the Blackshield

The histories of the Age of Darkness present far more mysteries and enigmas than reliable or complete accounts, and so entire armies of historator-scribes labour to piece together something of the truth from uncounted fragments of hearsay. In the examination, many such fragments reveal still more perplexing or troubling elements. At the twinned gas giants of Euros, for example, ashen-skinned, black-eyed warriors bearing the eye of the Warmaster upon otherwise featureless Mark VI battle plate, who could only have been renegade sons of Corax, sent the vast macro-bastions plunging through the crust, in so doing causing the fiery deaths of over twenty million colonists.

At Gamma-Dvalin, a force of warriors, each one wearing armour of discordantly mismatched heraldry and patterns torn from numerous dead foes, breached the Vaults of Ytterbia and plundered the forbidden stasis arsenals quantum-locked within. A month later, the stolen n-dimensional weapons were unleashed upon the 38th Company of the Sons of Horus Legion at Iantana Minor, consuming both armies and tearing an entire continent apart in the process. Fragmented pict-thief captures show several Blackshields bereft of their helms, each of them bearing an identical Cthonian gang rune tattooed across their scalp.

A Blackshield force is known to have launched attacks against Sons of Horus and Death Guard Legionaries at Taracanis, culminating in the boarding action against the Death Guard heavy cruiser *Morbid Revelation* and the spiking of its mighty nova cannon. The extent of the damage was not discovered until the weapon was next fired in anger, ten days later, against the Mechanicum Explorator Barque *Radiant Precept*, resulting in the *Revelation* being crippled in the ensuing back-blast and its forced withdrawal from the war.

At the Battle of the Ultinian Rings, Sons of Horus hunter-slayers under Tybalt Marr, tracking down survivors fleeing Isstvan V, were ambushed by a Blackshields force led by an individual later identified as the Raven Guard Strike-Centurion Morkan Sayle. In the ensuring battle, a sky-hive housing 100,000 colonists was destabilised and brought plummeting into the lyotropic crystal seas of Ultinia 7. Centurion Morkan was presumed dead in that operation, along with over half of his force, but contrary claims continue to emerge even decades later.

Each of these battles served in their own way to influence the course of the war not just at the local level, but at the strategic one. Even though the specifics of cause and effect were hidden at the time and are only barely perceivable to us now, many of our Order now believe that when considered as a whole, they amount to a significant contribution towards the ultimate ending of the war.

At first, most Shattered Legion forces focused their actions on high-intensity attacks against strategic targets far behind enemy lines, often with the military objective of disrupting lines of communication, but with the true goal of exacting bloody revenge on a hated foe too powerful to defeat in open battle. Soon however, opposed Shattered Legion forces encountered one another, and the result was inevitable. A second civil war erupted between rival Shattered Legion groups, and whilst neither was in direct communication with their own side's high command, inevitably both sides determined to destroy their foes at all costs and in so doing serve the strategic interests of the Traitors or the Loyalists. Though it went largely unseen, this war was said to have been every bit as bitter and bloody as the Dropsite Massacre, albeit fought not between vast Legions grinding one another to bloody ruin, but mixed bands of warriors sworn to exact retribution even at the cost of their own lives. The shadow wars would be fought warrior to warrior, the killing stroke delivered by the hand of the vengeful while staring the vanquished in the eye and damning his soul to a hell none would have invoked mere months earlier.

Blackshields

Perhaps the most extreme example of Legiones Astartes forces acting as irregular fighting units was to be found in the phenomenon of the '*Blackshield*'. Who first used the term or when is a matter of debate amongst our Order, but most doubt that the warriors in question described themselves as such. Evoking martial tradition of ancient times, a Blackshield was a warrior who had entirely denounced his parent Legion, or in some cases may never have known which Legion had in fact sired him. They often fought quite literally under a false banner, or one which bore no colour or badge at all so as to confuse or repudiate their allegiances or origins.

Groups of Blackshields engaging in battle against both sides of the Horus Heresy have been traced as early as the war for the Coronid Deeps, where a number of Legionaries clad in black-painted battle plate and bearing no iconography other than the Terran Aquila were reported as fighting for the Loyalist cause, but entirely separate from the Loyalist chain of command. This force refused to respond to any attempts at communication and is presumed to have been swallowed up in the anarchy that was the Imperium's fighting withdrawal from the Coronid Deeps.

The phenomenon of the appearance of the many and varied Blackshield groups is but one mystery among countless others that surfaced during the Horus Heresy, and one that continues to vex the Lords of Terra greatly, especially as the troubling matter of the status of the remaining Legiones Astartes and the judgement of certain splinter factions remains yet unresolved. Many different types of Blackshield existed, most defined by the circumstances of their formation. Some were Legionaries driven beyond even the trans-human limits gene-engineered into the Legiones Astartes and consumed by grief or insanity at the sheer scope of the Warmaster's betrayal. Many were so broken in mind and spirit, they no longer recognised or acknowledged the mastery of any lord and were determined to claim their own destiny even as the Imperium tore itself apart in bitter civil war.

One of the few defining factors common across Blackshields groups was the fact that all had renounced their heritage and none considered themselves as belonging or beholden in any way to their Primarch or their erstwhile brethren. Most, though not all, obscured their colours in some way, some repainting their armour black, others scouring it to bare metal. At least one group scorched their armour in a fire rite redolent of certain feral world pyrolatory-cults, during which they repudiated their heritage and their heraldry, leaving their armour cinder black. Others adopted entirely new heraldry of their own invention, either on a warrior-

by-warrior basis or by a strong-willed leader imposing his vision on the entire band. Thus, by the middle years of the Horus Heresy, Legiones Astartes forces bearing previously unseen colours were witnessed fighting across the entire galaxy.

As with the Shattered Legion forces, Blackshields were encountered on both sides of the war, and in many cases were fighting entirely for themselves. Some bore the eagle of Terra, while others wore the eye of the Warmaster, but others fought entirely for their own causes. None were part of any coherent chain of command and while they might occasionally have been co-aligned with the strategic aims of one side or the other, they never followed or sought orders from outside forces or consciously coordinated battle plans with them. Many bands of Blackshields were later declared by edict of the Terran Council to be murderers and pirates concerned only with claiming their own domains beyond the sight of Emperor or Warmaster, as was the case with the so-called Company of the Sundered at Boras Minor. While some of these might have been attempting to rebuild something of what Horus had destroyed, others were concerned only with carving out their own petty empires and enslaving those who were too weak to oppose them, as occurred at the Truan Systems at the hands of the Nine Blades. Some believed themselves to be continuing the work of the Great Crusade, carving a swathe of blood and ash across the void in memory of a dream which had turned to nightmare with the Warmaster's betrayal at Isstvan.

Many years of laborious investigation reveal that few Blackshield groups numbered more than a thousand or so warriors, and in terms of assets, they were often severely limited indeed. Most had access to some form of warship, either a Legion vessel or a lesser void craft captured during the course of their formation. Legiones Astartes escort vessels and rapid strike cruisers provided a combination of assault vessel and base of operations, being large enough to transport the group and what vehicles and landing craft it possessed, and sufficiently potent in battle to support assaults against lightly defended, outlying target worlds. The crews of such vessels were often bonded or indentured in some manner to their masters. Many were Legion serfs whose loyalties were simply transferred to their new lords, while others had willingly thrown in their lot with the outcasts or been forced to do so by cruel circumstance.

Whatever their origins, Blackshield groups were invariably led by individuals possessed of a fierce presence and the drive to forge their own destiny, and to sweep others along with them in their quest. Some, such as Nuhmarak, the so-called Crippled King of the Void, were darkly brooding warrior-lords, bitterly resentful of the fate that had befallen the galaxy. Others enthusiastically embraced their new existence and relished the chance to prey upon those weaker than themselves and to take by force that which they considered their rightful due, as was the case when the Umbral Hundred scoured twelve entire systems in the southern marches of the Chonma sector throughout 011.M31.

One particular sub-type of Blackshield is known of almost entirely through hearsay and myth, and our Order has struggled in vain to discover the full truth of their creation. These are the warriors who actively turned against their own and raised their weapons to oppose their Primarch and their erstwhile kin. None can say how many such groups existed, but certainly rumours abound of Legiones Astartes rejecting their heritage and defacing once proudly-worn Legion icons. Even clad in black, the origins of such warriors might be discerned by careful observation, for each of the Legions utilised its own artificer-wrought and often highly idiosyncratic sub-patterns of Legiones Astartes battle plate that betrayed the origins of the bearer.

These forces and many more, from the unseen Knights-Errant, the vengeful Shattered Legion formations to the outcast Blackshields, fought throughout the Age of Darkness, sometimes adding their weight to one side or the other, at other times pursuing their own inexplicable goals. As with so much of that anarchic era, little went recorded and many accounts that were committed to record were destroyed in the flames of war consuming the entire Imperium. The greater number of the battles of the shadow wars may never be known, but their consequences will no doubt echo down the ages unheeded by mortal men, the fates of some of the greatest heroes and villainous despots ever raised up from the hosts of Mankind lost to the Age of Darkness.

A KINGDOM DIVIDED

Between the breaking of the Ruinstorm across the galaxy in early 007.M31 and Roboute Guilliman's establishment of Imperium Secundus in 010.M31, civil war erupted across the entire galaxy. While most of the Legions, whether Traitor or Loyalist, operated as mighty armies led in person by their Primarch, every one of them had smaller forces detached to serve myriad roles across the Imperium. With the coming of the Ruinstorm, many of these detached forces were lost, cut off, isolated or simply never heard from again. In some cases, Crusade detachments returning from the outer void to find the Imperium in flames had no way of knowing the fate of their brethren, and were forced by circumstance to forge their own fates and to determine their own allegiance in a galaxy of blood, war and chaos.

Entire cohorts of historators and savants have attempted to piece together a coherent picture of the status and deployment of the major Legiones Astartes forces in this period. In all likelihood such a picture is impossible to compose in entirety, and so our knowledge must remain incomplete.

Dark Angels

The bulk of the I[st] Legion was engaged against the Night Lords for much of the period, and in the aftermath of the Lion's victory over the Traitor Primarch at Tsagualsa despatched numerous strike forces across the eastern galaxy to hunt down the splintered foe. Many did not return, pursuing their own missions across the Ultima Segmentum and beyond. Some of these detached forces encountered other similarly isolated or orphaned Legiones Astartes groups, finding common cause with some and fighting others to the death, the Ruinstorm making it impossible for them to return home or receive new orders.

Emperor's Children

As the Traitors advanced towards Terra, the bulk of the IIIrd Legion massed in a single fleet about its flagship, the *Pride of the Emperor*, and for many months after Isstvan V the Legion experienced a traumatic rebirth, falling from grace and becoming something other than it had been in the pursuit of its newly awakened dark passions. Fulgrim would at length regain control over his wayward sons and lead them in a quest that would see him attain a new and horrific mode of existence. The bulk of the remainder of the Emperor's Children had been ordered to track down and slay any Loyalists who had escaped. It was a mission many an Emperor's Children Legion praetor accepted and undertook with relish, and which many proved highly adept at prosecuting.

Iron Warriors

After Isstvan V, the Primarch Perturabo was tasked by Horus with a campaign of planetary assaults against key Loyalist fortress worlds, in particular those defending the marches of the Segmentum Solar. By the close of 009.M31 these were well underway, and while the Iron Warriors fleet remained centred on its Primarch, detached siege forces operated across the Imperium.

As they ground through Loyalist sectors, taking key bastion worlds as they advanced, the Iron Warriors assumed the role of brutal overlords, overseeing the consolidation of Traitor power on recently captured worlds. As such, they were often the target of attacks by orphaned Legiones Astartes forces and became experts in countering such raids.

White Scars

Thanks to the machinations of the Traitor Alpha Legion, the bulk of the Vth Legion was embroiled in a long and bitter war against the Orks at Chondax when the seeds of the Horus Heresy were being sown, and for quite some time the allegiance of their Primarch, Jaghatai Khan, was unknown. Those operating further afield were ignorant of their Primarch's intent and forced to determine their loyalties for themselves. The Primarch would later purge his Legion of those who had declared for Horus, and expel those who had come close to doing so. The latter were ordered to undertake a nigh-suicidal campaign of infiltration and assassination, numerous small forces of 'Sagyar Mazan' let loose into the galaxy to act as autonomous death-seekers.

Space Wolves

The Space Wolves sustained heavy losses in their battles against first the Thousand Sons Legion at Prospero and then the Alpha Legion in the aftermath of that operation, but remained a potent force largely held in reserve to defend Terra for much of the early to middle period of the Horus Heresy. Earlier however Leman Russ had, for his own reasons, despatched numerous small detachments to keep watch on other Legions, and of these not all are accounted for and some are likely to have acted either alone or in small groups alongside other, similarly disposed forces also cut off from their Legion's chain of command.

Imperial Fists

The bulk of the Imperial Fists stood at Terra with their Primarch, building Terra's defences against the Warmaster's inevitable invasion. However, a great many had been lost or scattered on the tides of the Warp on the voyage to or from the Phall system and so fought alongside other similarly isolated Legiones Astartes forces. Others had been deployed before the Horus Heresy as garrison forces across vast swathes of the Imperium and as worlds fell to the Warmaster's 'Dark Empire', so those forces that could fought a fighting withdrawal.

Night Lords

Throughout much of this period, the Night Lords were a highly splintered Legion, their fleet having been ambushed by the Dark Angels at the height of the Thramas Crusade and their Primarch grievously wounded at the hand of his brother. Sevatar, First Captain of the Legion, attempted to take control of the core of the Legion, but many of its individual companies and chapters rampaged through the Ultima Segmentum, pursuing their own dark missions of bloodshed among the stars. Not until the Legion was finally reunited with its Primarch were these forces drawn together into a coherent whole, and even then many remained in the darkness, accustomed to the night they had made their own and unwilling to submit themselves to higher command.

Blood Angels

At the opening of the Horus Heresy, the fate of the Blood Angels was unknown and this would remain the case until the Legion's return in 010.M31. The Blood Angels had been ordered to muster at the Nartaba System and from there to deploy to Signus Prime to crush a major recidivist uprising. Several thousand Legionaries never arrived there however, some serving as Lamentii honour guardians watching over silent battlefields wherever the Legion had shed its blood while others simply never reached Nartaba, their vessels cast far and wide upon the tides of the Warp when the Ruinstorm struck.

It was only later that news of their survival began to filter out and then only very slowly thanks to the Ruinstorm. For a period of

almost five years, many of those lost and scattered Blood Angels forces who survived their mis-jumps to Nartaba had every reason to believe themselves orphans.

Iron Hands

The most numerous of the Legions that were betrayed at Isstvan V, the Iron Hands were also the most affected for they lost their Primarch on the black sands of the Urgall Depression and with him all that made them the 'Iron Tenth'. The Legion fractured into factions and many coalesced, along with elements of other Legions, to form autonomous warfleets prosecuting their own wars against the Traitors. Many served in the Shattered Legions of Shadrak Meduson, some under Autek Mor and others still pursued their own campaigns of redemption at such 'places of vengeance' as Gagia, Sacrissan and Agromis, serving bloody justice upon their erstwhile brothers.

World Eaters

The bulk of the World Eaters were fully committed to the Shadow Crusade far to the galactic east, yet the Legion was in possession of a number of fief worlds, not least among them the muster world on which Angron had assumed command of his Legion—Bodt. Many were used as rapid induction and indoctrination centres in order to fuel the Legion's ceaseless hunger for new recruits. It was Loyalist Shattered Legion forces that first encountered these centres, and a long shadow war was waged for control of them, the World Eaters leading forces of hideous, rapid-grown inductii to hunt down and slaughter their troublesome foe.

Ultramarines

The bulk of the Ultramarines Legion had mustered at Calth and for most of 007.M31 and 008.M31 were engaged in the bitter war to repulse the so-called Shadow Crusade of the Primarchs Angron and Lorgar. Nevertheless, Legion detachments were stationed elsewhere, on lynchpin worlds such as Molech and serving in the Conquestor fleets of Rogue Trader Militants. There are likely to have been Ultramarines units that had not arrived at Calth when the Word Bearers' betrayal struck, and such units are likely to have operated as independent, autonomous forces until they re-established contact with their chain of command.

Death Guard

The bulk of the Death Guard Legion was accompanying the main Traitor advance alongside the Sons of Horus, and as such most of the Legion remained close to and directly under the command of their Primarch. The Legion came into frequent conflict with various elements of the Shattered Legions, in particular those of Shadrak Meduson whose forces operated deep behind Traitor lines in an effort to disrupt their control of the Warmaster's dark empire. Some accounts describe Death Guard Legion units detached from the main force with the aim of enacting terrible atrocities upon seemingly innocent target worlds in order to draw attacks by Loyalist elements operating far behind the main lines, unprecedented levels of destruction being unleashed simply to engage these comparatively small, yet highly disruptive forces.

Thousand Sons

Throughout this period, the majority of the Thousand Sons Legion was lost to the galaxy and their fate would not be known until sometime later. Nevertheless, rumours lingered of smaller groups fighting across the Imperium at locations as far-flung as Prism, Chbal, Logan's World and Yamnan, seemingly on both sides of the Loyalist/Traitor divide and frequently in the company of other orphaned forces, including Blackshields elements. None of these rumours have been, nor in all likelihood can ever be confirmed.

Sons of Horus

The Legion of the Warmaster himself was the main army of conquest throughout the Traitor advance on Terra, but smaller forces were detached, often alongside elements of the Emperor's Children, to hunt down those broken and scattered Loyalists who had escaped Isstvan V. Later on, the Legion would become the main target for numerous Loyalist Shattered Legion attacks. It fell to Tybalt Marr, a captain of the Sons of Horus, to combat these attacks and it was he who first perceived that they were not random assaults but each part of an impossibly complex strategy to bleed the Warmaster's Legion to a husk before it could reach its ultimate target – Terra.

Word Bearers

The bulk of the XVIIth Legion was engaged alongside the World Eaters in the Shadow Crusade against the Five Hundred Worlds of Ultramar, until their assault was cast back in late 008.M31. Numerous Word Bearers detachments served alongside other Traitor Legions however, often in order to impart their fell wisdom in matters of the Abyss and as such, they also had a presence in the Traitor forces assigned to hunt down and eradicate Loyalist Shattered Legions. Such forces often took the form of a Word Bearers Chaplain or Diabolist, attended by a number of Legion squads, who would serve alongside other Traitor Legion forces, support their operations and advise them in matters of esoteric lore.

Salamanders

The Salamanders suffered the most grievously of the three Legions betrayed at Isstvan V, and for several years had every reason to believe their Primarch was dead alongside that of the Iron Hands. Many of those who could fight clear of Isstvan V made their way back to Nocturne, while many others threw in their lot with the Iron Hands and Raven Guard, and fought on in these mixed units for much of the Horus Heresy. The fate of the Salamanders Primarch would only be revealed much later and it would be many generations before they were able to mount conventional operations again.

Raven Guard

Having survived the horrors of the Urgall Depression, the Primarch Corax began a program of rapid-induction of new recruits into his 'Raptor' companies in order to swiftly bolster his Legion's numbers, although many of these proved unstable. The bulk of the Legion then undertook a campaign to liberate worlds whose leaders had declared for the Warmaster, but it is suspected that several dozen smaller autonomous groups remained active in the darkness, perhaps following the 'nomad predation' mode of warfare.

Alpha Legion

The activities of the Alpha Legion throughout much of the Age of Darkness are shrouded in mystery; though the Legion's activities and operations may not always have been hidden, their objectives and aims certainly were. After Chondax, certain elements of the Alpha Legion appear to have been tasked with hunting down Loyalist Shattered Legions, a task they proved exceptionally adept at. Unlike Emperor's Children hunter-killer forces tasked with such missions, Alpha Legion hunters engaged in subtle and far-reaching espionage, sowing disinformation and confusion among the Loyalists and in so doing significantly furthering the Traitor cause.

Raven Guard Apothecary

Apothecary Kaylar Norn
Shattered Legion Attack Cell 'Plutonian Shore'
Battle of Arrisak

Apothecary Norn was once a member of the 4th Battalion of the Raven Guard 5th Chapter, a formation almost entirely wiped out by the Gal Vorbak of the Word Bearers Legion at the Isstvan V Dropsite Massacre. Norn was one of only a few dozen Legionaries of his battalion to escape the Urgall Depression that day, being evacuated on board a massively over-loaded Thunderhawk of the Iron Hands Legion to the Xth Legion warship, the *Ion-side*. Norn would later represent the Apothecarion of his Legion when scattered elements of the Raven Guard, Iron Hands and Salamanders gathered at Aeteria, and he witnessed the death of the Iron Hands flagship, the *Crown of Flame*, at Oqueth Minor at the hands of Tybalt Marr's hunter-killer force of Sons of Horus and Emperor's Children, swearing that day to follow Shadrak Meduson into the very pits of hell in order to bring the Traitors to justice.

Heraldry of the Apothecarion

Norn is depicted here bearing the full range of specialist Apothecary's equipment, as he appeared at the outset of the Battle of Arrisak, where he served as the most senior Apothecary on board the Raven Guard rapid strike cruiser, the *Plutonian Shore*, the red stripe on his Mark VI battle helm distinguishing him as a senior specialist. His skills were to be put to the most arduous of tests during that battle, when twenty entire decks of the *Plutonian Shore* were caught in a ravening plasma fire which consumed 300 Legionaries of four different Legions, and hideously wounded 500 more.

Raven Guard Legion Armourial

Legion Apothecarion, Common Icon

Iron Warriors Heavy Support Legionary

Legionary Krovorn
Battle Group 'Kurghan'
Scouring of the Wheel of Fire

Legionary Krovorn was once a member of the 14th Grand Company of the Legiones Astartes Iron Warriors. Having been wounded almost unto death at the Siege of the Schadenhold however, he was removed from the line as punishment and reassigned to a hunter-slayer force tasked with scouring the Wheel of Fire region of Loyalists thought to have fled there in the aftermath of Traitor ambushes along the coreward edge of the Hangman's Void. The Iron Warriors Primarch had little concern whether or not the force returned, and as a consequence it was constituted in a very similar manner to the Loyalists it was to pursue, acting in effect as a Traitor Shattered Legion.

Scars of Battle

Legionary Krovorn is depicted here as he deployed to the hunter-killer operation, still clad in the Mark III Legiones Astartes battle plate which, with deliberate symbolic intent, still bore the damage sustained at the fall of the Schadenhold. Of note are the jagged molecular bonding studs embedded in the right shoulder pauldron—the application of such ad-hoc armour reinforcement became so prevalent on both sides of the civil war that it was officially integrated into the specifications of Mark V and Mark VI Legiones Astartes power armour and informally retrofitted to many individual suits.

Variant Close Combat Modified Pauldron

Iron Warriors Legion Armourial with Olympia Device

Salamanders Terminator Legionary

Legionary Narvik Dre'haan
Baal Auxilliary Defence Force,
7th Provisional Battalion,
Under the Command of Captain Kar'tor

Legionary Dre'Haan was one of three members of his cadre to escape the massacre at Isstvan V, managing to fight through the press of Traitors and secure one of the few orbital transports to survive the firestorm in the skies of that dead world. The battered squadron of Imperial Army cruisers that carried Dre'Haan and the scattered remnants of his brethren arrived at Baal months after that fateful battle.

The Blood Angels, much reduced in number with the departure of Sanguinius and the bulk of the Legion, were quick to press these ragged stragglers into service against any Traitor assault on Baal. In total the Seneschal of Baal commissioned eight provisional battalions, a force of almost 8,000 Legiones Astartes warriors, for the defence of Baal. The 7th Battalion, of which Legionary Dre'Haan was a member, was typical of these formations, consisting of a mixed company of Salamanders and Iron Hands cataphractii, a line company of Salamanders infantry, a demi-company of Raven Guard reconnaissance units and a single company of Blood Angels assigned as custodians.

Pictured here prior to one of several Traitor probing assaults on Baal's defensive fortifications, Legionary Dre'Haan bears the ornate heraldry typical of his Legion, painstakingly repaired and restored after the damage inflicted on his battle plate on the killing fields of Isstvan V. The Nocturnean symbols on his greaves mark his expertise in both the forge and on the battlefield, while the chest ornamentation marks his prowess as a hunter of the fiery drakes that make their home in Nocturne's many volcanic mountains.

Nocturnean Runic Cadre Symbols,
as used during the fighting on Isstvan V.

Salamanders Tactical Support Legionary

Legionary Dha'lok
Shattered Legion Attack Cell 'Hesiod'
Assault on Dwell

Legionary Dha'lok was once a member of a Tactical Support Squad belonging to the 17th Line Company, most of whom were slain by the Traitor Alpha Legion at the Isstvan V Dropsite Massacre. Dha'lok was one of only a score of warriors from his company to escape the massacre; having been rendered unconscious by the blast of a Traitor Vindicator, he awoke in the bay of a Salamanders Storm Eagle in time to take part in the capturing of the Sons of Horus warship, the *Grey Talon*. Rescuing scores of Loyalists before being forced to break orbit, the boarders fled into the Warp, though the battle to root out every last Traitor onboard would grind on for many weeks. At length the vessel, renamed *Hesiod* in honour of one of Nocturne's great cities, would join the fleet of Shadrak Meduson and take its place in his vengeance-fuelled Shattered Legions.

Shattered Legions Wargear

Dha'lok maintained his role as a member of a Tactical Support Squad, and although his favoured weapon was the phaestos pattern flamer he had carried into the breach at the Urgall Depression, he was also adept in the use of melta and volkite weaponry. Dha'lok is depicted here clad in a hybrid suit of Legiones Astartes battle plate later codified as Mark V power armour. Dha'lok retained the helm and pauldrons of the Mark III armour he had worn at Isstvan V, marking the suit as a non-production class of Mark V.

Support Squad Designation Icon Variant

Salamanders Legion Armourial, Standard Usage

Iron Hands Tactical Legionary

Legionary Morkarch
Shattered Legion Attack Cell
(Formerly of Clan Vurgaan)
Cavor Sarta Incursion

Morkarch was a survivor of the Dropsite Massacre, one of the few of Clan Vurgaan to escape the Urgall Depression after being outflanked by World Eaters and Death Guard units. Morkarch linked up with a band of Raven Guard survivors and was evacuated to orbit on a XIXth Legion Stormbird and carried from the Isstvan System on the Iron Hands strike cruiser, the *Sisypheum*.

In the months after the flight from Isstvan, Morkarch fought in a mixed force of survivor Iron Hands, Raven Guard and Salamanders, each element united in bitter purpose as they ranged the southern marches of the Segmentum Obscurus hunting for Traitor pathfinder vessels scouting ahead of the Warmaster's advance on Terra. At length, the warriors of the *Sisypheum* established contact with other groups of the so-called Shattered Legions and coordinated their efforts with them in a campaign of vengeance that spanned half of the galaxy.

Battle Scars

Morkarch is depicted as he deployed to his attack cell's operation on the Mechanicum fief, Cavor Sarta, where he was slain by a previously unseen machine abomination wrought in the captured forge-fanes by Traitor Mechanicum. Morkarch retained the Mark III power armour he had worn at Isstvan V. The destroyed left arm was replaced by elements of Mark IV power armour, a feat that only Iron Hands Techmarines could achieve given the underlying incompatibilities between these two marks.

Iron Hands Legion Icon, Mid-Crusade Provenance

Mechanicum forge-issue ident markings

Iron Warriors Contemptor Dreadnought

Ancient Khragan, 'King-Killer'

Unidentified Iron Warriors Element, Loyalist Shattered Legions Force

Constantinium Incursion

Ancient Khragan was once a member of the 14th Grand Company of the IVth Legion under Warsmith Dantioch. The 14th was heavily defeated in battle against a massive Hrud migration, and when Dantioch blamed the migration on the actions of other Iron Warriors units in a neighbouring war zone, he and many of the survivors were censured by their Primarch. Khragan was amongst those assumed to have been slain in that battle, and so his appearance, along with several dozen other Iron Warriors also thought fallen, in a Shattered Legions attack force at Constantinium is a mystery. It was by Khragan's hand that the Traitor Magister-Militaris of Constantinium was slain, earning him the epithet '*King-Killer*'.

Ancient Khragan's Contemptor Dreadnought bears the hallmarks of the IVth Legion's forge, its main body wrought according to the brutalist sensibilities of the Iron Warriors, including additional armour plating and reinforcing bonding studs. The Dreadnought is equipped with the multi-melta that Khragan used to burn through the Magister-Militaris' twenty metre-high, two metres-thick throne room doors, and the power claw which he used to choke the life from the Traitor leader at the climax of the Constantinium Incursion.

A Selection Of Notable Elements Of The Great Betrayal & The Age Of Darkness

Compiled by manifold and diverse hands at the order of the Acting Council of Terra

++ Istar-Apelph-IX Clearance required to view++

++ Displaying Extract Document Sample Entries in chronological order++

000.M31: The Ullanor Triumph
The Emperor declares the Great Crusade won and returns to Terra to continue His great work, pronouncing His favoured son, Horus, Warmaster to carry out the last battles of Compliance and extermination in His name across the remaining dark frontiers of the galaxy.

004.M31: The Davin Campaign and the Fall of Horus
Warmaster Horus is grievously wounded while fighting rebels on the moon of Davin. He is healed within the ancient Serpent Lodge of Davin but though his life is saved, his soul is forfeit to the Ruinous Powers. From this day he makes his plans to bring the Imperium to ruin and topple the Emperor from power. Though his treachery and malign intent long remain hidden, he begins his far-reaching conspiracy to suborn those of his brothers' Legions and the other forces of the Imperium who will aid him and neutralise the threat of those who will not where he can, while preparing in secret to fight a sudden and ruthless civil war.

004-005.M31: Razing of Prospero
Magnus, Primarch of the Thousand Sons, learns of his brother's fall and attempts to warn the Emperor using psychic arts forbidden by the Edict of Nikaea. He inadvertently unmakes his father's great work and the Space Wolves are ordered to Prospero to bring him to answer. The Warmaster intervenes and convinces his brother Russ that Magnus' crime is so dire, his life is forfeit. The Space Wolves raze Prospero to ashes, and while Magnus escapes, his Legion is reduced to but a thousand warriors.

004-009.M31: The Signus Cluster
The bulk of the Blood Angels Legion is dispatched to the distant Signus Cluster to put down a local uprising. Knowing the IXth Legion will never join his cause and fearing their Primarch, Horus sets his trap at Signus Prime, where the Blood Angels are beset by a foe none have ever faced before, the Daemon legions of the Ruinous Powers, and assailed by terrifying psychic assaults and distortions of reality.

005-006.M31: Betrayal at Isstvan III
Horus musters four entire Legions to put down rebellion at Isstvan III, and having turned their Primarchs to his treacherous cause, engineers the purging of tens of thousands of Legionaries not trusted to follow them. All does not go to plan however and a small number of Loyalists escape the carnage to carry word of the Traitors' actions to Terra.

005-006.M31: The Schism of Mars
Fabricator-general of the Mechanicum Kelbor Hal turns against the Imperium and plunges Mars into civil war, those loyal to Terra forced to abandon the Red Planet. Elsewhere, the Schism of Mars sunders the feudal order of the Mechanicum and its bonds with the Imperium, many Forge Worlds side with the Traitors, others with the Emperor and still others declare independence from either side. So likewise are the Titan Legions, the Skitarii legions and the powerful Taghmata riven with division.

568006.M31: The Isstvan V Dropsite Massacre
With Terra warned of the Warmaster's treachery at Isstvan III, eight entire Legions are ordered by Terra to crush the Traitors' rebellion, but unbeknownst to the rest, Horus has already turned three of them and ensured the fourth is delayed. The first wave makes planetfall but is betrayed by the second wave, and in the bloodiest three hours of war ever fought by the Legiones Astartes, three Legions are almost entirely wiped out, one Primarch slain and two others lost.

006.M31: The First Battle of Paramar
Alpha Legion forces allied with the Traitor Mechanicum of Taghmata Satarael and the Titans of the Legio Fureans mount a surprise attack on the strategically vital lynchpin system of Paramar before their true allegiance becomes known to the defenders. Paramar is a vital stepping stone to Terra, the location of a vast arms cache of the Great Crusade and a vital communications hub. The Pharaeon of Paramar, its primary void station, is quickly taken, but a full planetary assault of Paramar V becomes necessary as Loyalist Mechanicum and Legio Gryphonicus Titan forces, as well as the unexpected intervention of a Loyalist cadre of the Iron Warriors Legion, offers the invaders strong resistance. The valiant defence however is overwhelmed and Paramar falls to the Traitors, cutting off much of the most stable transit routes to the northern Imperium.

007.M31: The Phall Engagement
Having been cast far off course and stymied by warp storms enroute to Isstvan V by the machinations of the Warmaster's dark allies, the Imperial Fists are becalmed for long months at the Phall System. Only by maintaining a constant state of readiness and the genius of their commander is the fleet saved from utter destruction when the Traitor Iron Warriors attack. At the height of the engagement, a message from Terra finally breaks through the turbulent Warp, the Primarch of the Imperial Fists ordering his fleet to return to Terra at once.

007-008.M31: The Shadow Crusade
The Word Bearers and World Eaters invade the Five Hundred Worlds of Ultramar with the aim of utterly destroying the domain of the Ultramarines and drawing Loyalist forces away from the Warmaster's advance on Terra. During the conflict, which centres around the perfidious attack of the Word Bearers at the Calth Muster, scores of worlds are ravaged and the involvement of the Ruinous Powers in aid of the Traitor cause is first widely manifest in open war, transfiguring both of the Traitor Legions involved.

007-009.M31: The Manachean War and the Dark Compliances
His treachery revealed at last, the Warmaster begins his relentless advance on Terra, forcing the Dark Compliance of countless regions across the northern Imperium to provide his forces with a resource base to fight what will now become a protracted and relentless war. Foremost among his targets are the Manachean Commonwealth, the Coronid Deeps and their surrounding regions, where a particularly savage campaign is conducted by the Sons of Horus and Death Guard which brings the economically vital worlds of the Manachean Commonwealth to fuel the Traitors' cause. This wider campaign also places the fleet-anchorage of Port Maw under the Warmaster's talon and sees the stubbornly Loyalist Forge Worlds of Lucius and Mezoa isolated and besieged, while the Traitor-aligned Forge World of Cyclothrathe begins to carve out its own pocket empire in the region.

007.M31: The Wolf and the Khan
The White Scars learn of the Warmaster's heresy when they establish contact with Leman Russ in the aftermath of the Space Wolves' destruction of Prospero. Faced with the dilemma of aiding the weakened Space Wolves against a powerful force of Alpha Legion attackers, or returning to Terra as ordered by Rogal Dorn, Jaghatai Khan, Primarch of the White Scars, chooses the higher duty and ultimately returns to Terra.

007.M31: The Calth Conjunction
Mustering at Calth on orders issued by the Warmaster before Isstvan, the Ultramarines and Word Bearers prepare for a campaign against the Orks of the Ghaslakh xeno-hold. The Ultramarines are unaware of the Word Bearers' true allegiance and utterly unprepared for betrayal, and suffer horrific losses. The Traitors' real objective is the murder of the Veridia star as an offering to the Ruinous Powers that would bring about the Ruinstorm, a warp tempest so large, it would sever the galaxy in half and render all long-range Warp travel unpredictably dangerous, and trans-luminal communication all but impossible. The Age of Darkness begins.

007-009.M31: The Thramas Crusade
Horus orders the Traitor Primarch Konrad Curze of the Night Lords to neutralise the three Forge Worlds of Thramas, thereby denying the Loyalists a major source of war machines and materiel in the eastern Imperium. The murderous Night Lords succeed in destroying two of the region's Forge Worlds and wounding the third grievously before going on to undertake a campaign of terror and bloodshed that leaves a trail of murdered worlds in the Night Haunter's wake.

007-017.M31: The Underworld War
Its surface ravaged by the slow death of the Veridia star, the Battle for Calth between trapped forces of those Ultramarines and Word Bearers still locked in a death-struggle descends into the extensive arcologies. The Underworld War grinds on for ten years before the last of the Traitors is finally hunted down and slain.

008.M31: Blood among the Pale Stars
A previously unidentified Blackshields group of unknown provenance, calling itself the Dark Brotherhood, carves out its own corsair empire on the edge of the Pale Stars and begins a long war against an Alpha Legion hunter-killer force tasked with crushing resistance to the Warmaster's Dark Compliance. This is but one of the largest of an unknown number of 'splinter' Legiones Astartes reaver forces recorded in the frontiers and war zones of the embattled Imperium during what becomes known as the Age of Darkness. While some such forces retain the livery of their Legions, but seem to operate without any direct connection to the chain of command of the Loyalists or the Traitors, other 'Blackshields' abandon their livery, bear false colours or invent new liveries and identities of their own, some operating as wanton marauders, others as nomadic survivors in hiding, while others carve out petty empires in a war-torn galaxy or fight their own private wars of vengeance.

008.M31: The Destruction of Bodt
The World Eaters fief world and Legiones Astartes training ground on Bodt is attacked by Autek Mor of the Iron Hands and an allied independent Loyalist force. After a savage battle, Mor is believed to have entered the subterranean macro-vaults of the city of Tredecimmia before scouring every trace of life from the surface. Bodt's supply line of initiate recruits to the World Eaters Legion is permanently severed.

008.M31: The Burning Grave of Ohmn-Mat
The Forge World of Ohmn-Mat in the Ultima Segmentum falls into a state of civil

war as its Synod of Magos are split in their support for Loyalist and Traitor causes, drawing in contingents of the Sons of Horus Dark Compliance forces and Iron Hands Isstvan survivors as the conflict escalates. In circumstances which remain unknown, the planet's atmosphere is somehow ignited, shrouding the world in fire. Secondary atomantic explosions ravage the surface as forge-fanes across the world succumb and fuel the flames. Ohmn-Mat is destroyed and its fires still rage till the present.

008.M31: Fall of Baztel III
Space Wolves strike forces eradicate the entire 39th Millennial of the Emperor's Children during the storming of the Vykstag Winter Palace as part of the Baztel III campaign for control of the Brozyn-Primaris sector of the Segmentum Obscuras. Leaderless, the Baztel secessionist rebellion succumbs to infighting and ultimately genocidal civil war. While exiting the sector, elements of the Space Wolves strike force clashes inconclusively with an unknown and elusive Legiones Astartes force which bears no recognisable heraldry.

008.M31: The Blight of Isessos
A series of void raids on the outskirts of the Isessos system in the Segmentum Pacificus by an Alpha Legion strike group leads to severe casualties, which are returned to the colony habitats of the system's three agri-worlds for treatment. Several of the casualties are later found to have been infected with an unknown algal strain, harmless to humans but lethal to plant life. Within the year, the system's vast macro-output saturation fields have been reduced to poisonous slime, resulting in a sector-wide famine which causes the death of an estimated ninety billion Imperial citizens and the complete political destabilisation of the region.

008.M31: The Dagonet Incident
The hidden clade-masters of Terra dispatch their most potent assassins to the recently fallen world of Dagonet in an attempt to strike down the Warmaster. They are unsuccessful, but from their failure Terra learns much of the new and dreadful powers wielded by its foe.

008-009.M31: The Vannaheim Space Drop
The Iron Warriors launch a daring void assault against the orbital hives of Vannaheim, capturing the vital facilities after ten days of brutal fighting. A Loyalist force in the nearby Segmentum Tempestus, including isolated elements of the Space Wolves Legion, is drawn into the conflict, launching three successive counter-assaults in order to recapture the orbital hive stations' vital altitudinal control grid, but each fails to achieve its goals and countless thousands of Loyalist lives are lost. The famed Space Wolves grand cruiser, *Helicon Spear*, is captured and becomes a prize of the Iron Warriors Legion during the last, disastrous attempt.

009.M31: The Tsagualsa Incident
Forces of the Dark Angels Legion ambush the Night Lords at Tsagualsa, inflicting severe losses. Lion El'Jonson of the Dark Angels and the Night Haunter clash in direct contest of arms after a failed parley, and both are so grievously wounded that their warriors are forced to drag them clear of each other before the matter can be settled.

009.M31: Xana Incursion
Intelligence reaches Terra that the renegade Forge World of Xana on the western fringe of the Imperium has reached an accord with the Traitor forces to supply the Warmaster's armies with its vast output of arms and materiel. The bargain is to be sealed with the delivery by Xana of a number of newly created powerful Ordinatus class weapons undergoing final field tests. In what is effectively a suicide mission, a handpicked force of Legiones Astartes, including many Blackshields —in this case Space Marines who have chosen to remain loyal despite their parent Legion's treachery— is despatched under great secrecy to destroy the war machines and drive a wedge between Xana and the Traitors.

009-053.M31: The Carnage of Morox
In one of the largest confrontations of Loyalist- and Traitor-aligned auxilia and militia forces, in excess of three billion battlefield fatalities are recorded as the death toll from a grinding war of attrition on the sector-capital world of Morox Excellus. The Morox sector's civil war takes place in almost total isolation owing to turbulent warp storm activity and lack of any real strategic significance to either side of the wider conflict, and is noted for the exponentially increasing levels of atrocity and rapid technological regression of the conflict.

009.M31: The Battle of Arissak
Having pursued the numerous attack cells made up of Iron Hands, Salamanders and Raven Guard survivors of Isstvan V, Captain Tybalt Marr of the Sons of Horus finally brings them to battle, destroying the massed fleet of Shadrak Meduson's so-called 'Shattered Legion' force at Arissak.

009.M31: The Incident at Dwell
Having escaped death at Arissak, one of Shadrak Meduson's surviving Shattered Legion attack cells launches a daring assassination attempt on Warmaster Horus at Dwell. With his brother-Primarchs Fulgrim and Mortarion at his side, Horus prevails, but having had the true threat revealed to him grants Tybalt Marr permission to take any action he deems appropriate to eradicate the so-called 'Shattered Legions'.

009.M31: The Battle of Molech
Horus leads his Legion in the invasion of the fortress world of Molech, where the Knight House Devine turns against the Imperium and joins the invading force, betraying the defenders to their deaths. A force of the elite Knights-Errant, a secretly founded Order of Loyalist agents, are dispatched to Molech by Malcador the Sigillite to prepare the way for a direct assault by the Space Wolves against the Warmaster's flagship. Having recently won the full blessings of the Ruinous Powers, Horus is undefeatable and only a handful of Knights-Errant escape to bring news of the his redoubled strength back to Terra.

009.M31: The Sangraal Campaign and the Salvation Run
A hand-picked Imperial Fists assault force despatched from Terra launches a daring raid to capture the antidote to a slow-burning Exterminatus class viral weapon deployed against the Loyalist holdfast of Gramercie on the contested hive world of Herkaliaum. After recovering the antidote stocks from the Traitor Mechanicum-Biologis gene-labs, the heavily outnumbered Imperial Fists then fight their way through massed Traitor forces, running a deadly gauntlet through the underhives of Herkaliaum to deliver the antidote to Loyalist medicae detachments, thus saving the population of the Gramercie sub-hive. Viral overspill ravages the Traitor forces now unable to contain or cure the contagion in their own ranks, and within weeks, Herkaliaum is liberated. The legend of the '*Salvation Run*' becomes a rallying cry for Loyalist support in the sector, turning the Sangraal Campaign in the Loyalists' favour and cementing their hold on the Segmentum Solar.

009.M31: The Establishment of the Imperium Secundus
With the Imperium severed in two halves, isolated and ignorant of each other as a result of the raging tumult of the Ruinstorm, the light of the Astronomican is no longer visible from Ultramar and no word of the Emperor has been heard for several years.

Guilliman declares the foundation of the '*Imperium Secundus*' as a means of continuing the fight against the Traitors and securing the Emperor's great work. When the Blood Angels arrive at Ultramar having escaped Signus, Guilliman pronounces Sanguinius as the rightful heir to the Emperor. [Extract sanctioned for data purge]

010-015.M31: The Solar War
The Battle for the Sol System, long threatened, begins as infiltration forces and probing raids from without, and Mechanicum attacks and attempted break-outs from besieged Traitor Mars test the defences of the Throneworld of humanity. Conflict within the system is not concluded until the eventual lifting of the Siege of Terra. {See Extrapolation Addenda CVX-CVXVIII –Classified Amaranth-Gold}

010.M31: The Scouring of Gilden's Star
Scattered elements of the Blood Angels Legion fight a long and bloody campaign against Word Bearers forces near the galactic core on the borders of Imperium Secundus that culminates in the near-total destruction of both armies. During the campaign, the Blood Angels prove merciless in scouring worlds which have embraced the daemonic teaching of the 'dark apostles' of the Word Bearers, putting all seven colonised worlds of Gilden's Star to the sword in one particularly notable instance.

010.M31: The Battle of Nyrcon
Under the direction of Rogal Dorn, a Loyalist battlegroup led by elements of the Salamanders Legion, and supported by thirty regiments of the Imperialis Auxilia and a strike force of Legio Astorum Titans, engage an Emperor's Children millennial assigned to garrison the Beta-Garmon System on the edge of the Segmentum Solar. The Emperor's Children contingent is surprised at Nyrcon City on Beta-Garmon II and after a hard-fought battle, the Emperor's Children forces along with their Legio Mortis allies at Beta-Garmon III are driven out, placing the system into Loyalist hands and triggering within the year the first of an escalating series of Traitor counter-attacks with the goal of retaking Beta-Garmon as a stepping stone for an eventual attack on Terra. Ultimately, these will only serve as a prelude to the far greater conflict in the system to come.

010-12.M31: Fate of the Sabalis Liberatus
The *Sabalis Liberatus*, a Raven Guard Legion battlecruiser lost in the Warp since escaping the void battle over Isstvan V, finally breaks into realspace near Galaspar on the borders of the Veiled Region on the southern galactic fringe. The survivors on board, comprising a mixture of Loyalist Legions, have spent the time in self-imposed suspended animation and awake to find themselves utterly cut off from information or support. Fired on by Imperial patrol vessels whose captains have sided with the Traitors, this 'Shattered Legion' force boards the patrol vessels and conquers their attackers. Effecting repairs from the captured ships, they begin a further two-year odyssey of battle to return them to the Segmentum Solar and finally Terra, where they will ultimately fight in the void battles against the Traitor onslaught in the closing days of the war.

010-012.M31: The Death of Tallarn
Tallarn, an Imperial muster world of almost unparalleled size and importance, comes under direct attack by the Iron Warriors Legion. Here the Traitors unleash a virus bombardment that renders the surface of the verdant world of Tallarn to poisoned slime and the air unbreathable. The invasion that follows develops into the largest armoured battle of the Imperium's history, a war fought under the most hellish conditions imaginable. As the war grinds on, it draws in Loyalist and Traitor forces from hundreds of worlds across the entire Segmentum Tempestus before its cataclysmic conclusion.

010.M31 The Dispute of Iron Begins
Across border sectors of the Segmentum Tempestus and Segmentum Pacificus are located numerous lesser Forge Worlds known collectively as the Belt of Iron. Since the sundering of the Imperium, many of their number have declared for the Traitor cause at the engineering of the Fabricator-general of Mars, while others have remained loyal to Terra or in some cases sought to remain aloof from the conflict as much as possible. Strife and tentative conflict between these once-aligned worlds erupts finally into full scale war in 010.M31, which pitches the Mars-aligned Forge Worlds of Incunabula, Urdesh, Valia-Maximal and Kalibrax against the forces of Loyalist Forge Worlds Graia, Arl'yeth and Atar-Median, while Arachnis and Jerulas Station both fall into the anarchy of civil war. The resulting conflict, that later becomes known as the Dispute of Iron, sees the forge lords, their armies and allied Titan Legions and Knight Households turn on each other in protracted warfare, with scores of human-inhabited worlds in the region suffering as they become the battlegrounds upon which they fight.

011.M31: The Malagant Conflict
With the surviving Loyalist enclaves apparently crippled by the Warmaster's onslaught, those Death Guard elements assigned to the garrison of Barbarus spearhead an assault into the southern reaches of the Imperium. The grim warriors of Barbarus made the vast industrial hives of Malagant their prime target, a world made valuable for the strategic worth of its manufactoria, and to crush the defiance of the surrounding sectors, many of whom looked to the determined Loyalist leaders of Malagant for leadership. Yet where the Death Guard had expected to crush the Malagantine auxilia in short order, they found themselves mired in cunning ambushes and punishing counter-attacks led by Legiones Astartes bearing the sable mark of the Raven Guard. Lacking the numbers to meet the Traitors head-on, the sons of Corax plied their deadly skills as skirmishers and assassins upon their erstwhile brothers; trapping them on a world they could not afford to abandon, battling a foe they could not pin down and crush. For three years, little more than a company of Raven Guard occupied an augmented chapter of Barbarus' finest, until 014.M31 when the Death Guard retreated in the face of approaching Loyalist reinforcements from Inwit.

013.M31: A Return To Honour
Arcaes Odenathus, a Captain-praetor of the Ultramarines 10th Chapter, rallies the scattered survivors of his own brethren and those other Loyalists fighting across the Dominion of Storms in the galactic north-east and leads them to Honourum. Unexpected and unlooked for, this Loyalist assault strikes the Word Bearers garrison like a thunderbolt. Three weeks of desperate fighting ensues, and as all the Word Bearers' urgent requests for reinforcements are ignored by the Warmaster, focussed now on his push toward Terra, the sons of Lorgar resort to the most heinous of tactics. Daemons, warp-tainted infiltrators and terrors of the wars of Old Night are unleashed, with both sides driven on past mortal endurance by hatred. When the last Traitor finally fell, there was nothing left of the grand cities of Honourum but blasted ruins; ruins whose very substance was so contaminated by the fel powers and terrible weapons unleashed that they would blight Honourum longer than the memory of the wars which spawned them.

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Upon the Anvil of War

"All things must be tested; placed upon the anvil and beaten until the heart of their being is exposed and measured. This is as true of loyalty as it is of steel, for loyalty that is never tested is as worthless as flawed metal."

Codicil 13:9, The Book of Vulkan

A Flawed Heart

The storm of war came unbidden and unexpected to the northern expanses of the Imperium during the opening of the seventh year of the 31st Millennium, at the very outset of the wars that would later be known as the Horus Heresy. Spreading from the ruined worlds of the Isstvan System like a dark stain across the face of the Emperor's once-vast realm, the Legions sworn to the Traitor Warmaster took system after system, wielding lies, threats and cruel violence with equal abandon. Even as those who remained loyal struggled to comprehend the conflict that had taken form around them, the Traitors secured for themselves a dark realm in the far galactic north. Yet, even in its birthing throes, Horus' empire showed its flaws, for those of his brothers he had turned to his cause and named as warlords and satraps of his new conquests quickly fell to bickering at the slightest setback, ever-keen to place themselves above their brethren.

Of the early failures of Horus' great hosts, one of the most notable is the Siege of Epsilon-Stranivar IX, known to the armies of the Great Crusade as Fortress Stranivar, a conflict that features prominently in several Legions' battle honours. Found at the very edges of the Coronid Deeps, Fortress Stranivar had at one point served as a forward staging point for the Great Crusade, and now stood as the last redoubt for broken Imperial battalions retreating from battlegrounds across the galactic north, the last Loyalist stronghold on Horus' flanks. A small Imperial Fists garrison, augmented by companies of the Raven Guard, Salamanders, Iron Hands and even a contingent of errant Blood Angels whose craft had evaded the pursuing forces of Horus, held the world, refusing to retreat in the face of overwhelming assault having sworn inviolable oaths to secure it in the Emperor's name. It fell to the amassed might of the Iron Warriors, Death Guard and Alpha Legion to cast down the Loyalists' fortifications and claim the defiant world for the Warmaster, a task that was to reveal the deeply graven flaws in Horus' host.

Where the Loyalist Legions stood shoulder to shoulder as brothers, united by their defiance of the Traitor Warmaster, each of the Legions sworn to Horus fought only for themselves. Each of the three waged a separate campaign, making little attempt to share resources or intelligence, and placing the blame for their failures on their rivals. In particular, the Iron Warriors contingent, the 114th Grand Battalion, was ill-used by its allies. Time and time again the Alpha Legion companies allowed them to attack unsupported into the guns of the dug-in Loyalists while using the confusion to mount their own spoiling attacks on high priority targets, claiming all the glory and ignoring the cost in lives paid by Perturabo's sons. During the climactic battle of the campaign, at the Siege of Vharna where the Traitor host broke on the Loyalists' lines, the 114th Grand Battalion was effectively abandoned by both the Alpha Legion and the Death Guard. Left to act as a sacrificial rearguard, of the 6,000 Iron Warriors who took to the field, less than a third would leave alive and the highest ranked officer who remained to them, Nârik Dreygur of the Apolakron, swore that one day his fallen brothers would be avenged.

Victory for the Loyalists at Fortress Stranivar was but a temporary reprieve, with the planet falling to a renewed assault by the Sons of Horus Legion less than a year later, but its consequences would yet haunt the Traitors. For in the disunity of the vast host lay the only hope of victory for the scattered and outnumbered forces of the Emperor. Not only was it a strategy that was used time and again to blunt the Warmaster's assaults as news of the Loyalists' few victories spread throughout the beleaguered Imperium, but as each battle was fought, the rifts between the Traitor warlords and their followers grew ever wider and more volatile.

Devils from the Outer Dark

While hope flickered dimly along the front lines of the war for the Imperium, many of the Emperor's strongest supporters were still uncertain of the events occurring in the far reaches of His wide dominion. On distant Nocturne, where Vulkan had left Nomus Rhy'tan as Keeper of the Legion fortress of Prometheus, there had been no news since the departure of the Primarch and the bulk of the Legion to Isstvan V almost a full standard year before. All that had reached the ears of the Lord Chaplain were disturbing rumours of a dark empire in the galactic north and of the fall of Primarchs, but no hint as to who had fallen and who stood victorious.

With only the untested neophyte battalions and a few thousand instructors in his charge, Lord Chaplain Rhy'tan had little means to mount a second great expedition to investigate the fate of his lord, for to do so would leave Nocturne unprotected and violate the last orders he had received from Vulkan. Yet such a matter could not be simply ignored; without proper intelligence he was at equal risk of failing in his duty as Keeper and protector of the Salamanders Legion's home world.

Where he could not dispatch a grand fleet to discover the fate of his lord and brothers, Rhy'tan would send a single ship. The prototype assault cruiser *Ebon Drake* was the first of a new breed of Legiones Astartes void craft, designed and constructed by the peerless artisans of the XVIIIth Legion to complement the tactical preferences of her post-human masters, rather than a simple refit of some ancient mark of battleship. Lean and deadly, the *Ebon Drake* would seek out the truth for Rhy'tan as well as any hastily assembled battle squadron, and should his worst fears prove true, would perhaps be better suited to evade whatever ill had befallen Vulkan and his brothers.

Historia Terra Regnum

War in the Coronid Deeps

As the hosts of the Warmaster first marched on the Imperium, they sought to conquer those regions of the Northern Fringes that sat close by Isstvan, seeking to create a dark empire from which Horus could fuel the campaign to assault the walls of the Imperial Palace on Terra itself. Absolute control of this area of space was vital to his plans, for without a stable industrial base and strong lines of supply for his Legions, any campaign intended to seize the vast Imperium of Mankind by force was doomed to failure. By the end of the wars to seize those sectors that adjoined Isstvan, there were but three main holdouts of Loyalist troops: the Forge World of Mezoa, Agathon and those worlds held in fealty to that ancient realm, and the old Great Crusade way-station of Stranivar.

Both Mezoa and Agathon, although they yet resisted conquest, were wholly surrounded and effectively neutralised; Stranivar, however, formed a nexus point of several key stable warp-canals leading throughout the sector and beyond. As long as it remained in Loyalist hands, it could potentially form a fortified beachhead for any counter-invasion of the Coronid Deeps by forces mustered from further within the Imperium. Thus it was of no surprise that Horus set his generals to the reduction of Stranivar by storm, seeking to gain control of this strategic position for his own assault into the Imperium.

The Ebon Drake

During the years of the Great Crusade, and indeed for much of the long wars of the Scouring that were to follow the Horus Heresy, the vast majority of the fleets of the Legiones Astartes were ancient warships that had once served the Terran void navies or were the product of the vast shipyards of Jupiter and Neptune. These craft were undeniably powerful, bearing vast batteries of ancient and terrible weaponry and sheathed in nigh-impregnable armour, but they were ill-suited to the many strategic challenges faced by the Emperor's elite.

The *Ebon Drake* was the first of a new breed of warship, her plans laid down by Vulkan himself in the last years of the Great Crusade. These cruisers were no lumbering behemoths, but lean hunters created to bring swift death to the foes of Mankind, to blast craft asunder and purge strongholds. Fitted with extensive flight decks built to house the newer Thunderhawk gunships as well as the older Stormbird classes of dropcraft, and massive batteries of bombardment cannon, they would allow the Great Crusade to proceed apace.

However, with the coming of Horus' civil war, such plans fell by the wayside and only a few prototype craft were ever constructed by the various Legions that Vulkan had gifted his designs to. It was not until 019.M31 that such designs were revisited and modified to arm and equip the warriors of the Second Founding.

Rhy'tan himself could not depart Nocturne, and he had few seasoned warriors to spare, so instead he assigned from among the ranks of the Salamanders chaplains an officer of the utmost potential, although perhaps lacking in the centuries of battlefield knowledge possessed by Rhy'tan and some of the older veterans. As crew for the *Ebon Drake*, he assigned a core of thirty veterans of the Firedrakes, warriors whose steadfast courage and determination would inspire the raw recruits who would make up the bulk of the crew. Of those battalions of Neophytes currently in training on Nocturne, Rhy'tan selected a full company of those most recently promoted to the station of Legiones Astartes, carefully choosing representatives from amongst all the domains of Nocturne and those off-world domains of the XVIIIth Legion, for he believed this mission must represent the will and strength of his entire Legion.

Xiaphas Jurr, taken as part of the XVIIIth Legion's tithe of the world of Proximal and now named commander of the *Ebon Drake*, took to his mission with all the fervour of his ancient Proximan forebears, that superstitious breed of Mankind that had once dubbed the XVIIIth Legion the '*Devils from the Outer Dark*'. Seeing in his commission a task as much a matter of deeply held belief in his Primarch as one of strategic significance, Chaplain-Lieutenant Jurr gave his fledgling crew no respite, departing the safe enclave of space around Nocturne immediately and setting a punishing regime of combat drills to prepare those under his command for the unknown. For with the rising tumult that suffused the ætheric seas of the Warp, steering a direct course to Isstvan was impossible, a feat beyond the talents of their Navigator. Instead they would be forced to travel by a more circuitous route, translating from the Warp periodically to affirm their bearings and to gather information, and leaving them vulnerable to any as yet unknown foe they might encounter.

The Empty Void

Much of the voyage is now lost to us, unrecorded by the crew of the *Ebon Drake* and impossible to track in the wake of the destruction wrought in the civil war that engulfed the Emperor's domain. However, a comprehensive search of the augur logs of the uncounted millions of navigation beacons and astropathic relay stations that dot the Imperium allows us to trace some of the route of the *Ebon Drake*, whose long journey led her across paths rarely trod by stellar travellers. Some few encounters are known to us in detail, from ships' logs or information recovered from other sources, while many remain but partial references whose full details may never be known.

From what information is available it is agreed that the first emergence of the *Ebon Drake* was at Sulis, where the system lords had barred entry to all vessels in response to the rumours of war and civil strife, and enforced their isolation with a ring of heavily fortified gun platforms. Bearing messages of support from Nocturne and its Keeper, Chaplain-Lieutenant Jurr approached only to be met by insult and weapons fire. Sulis no longer accepted the Emperor as its master and neither would it bow to this new Warmaster. Such secessionist sentiment was far from uncommon during the chaos of the Horus Heresy, but Jurr and the Salamanders of Nocturne had as yet little information on the current state of the galaxy and found such an affront to the spirit of the Great Crusade unbearable.

In a three day battle, the *Ebon Drake* scoured the system of its orbital defence platforms, and harried the wallowing squadrons of interdiction barges. The cumbersome system defence craft, though heavily armed, could not match the *Ebon Drake's* speed and proved easy prey for her guns and the righteous anger of the boarding parties, led by Chaplain-Lieutenant Jurr. In the climactic battle of the short and bitter campaign, Jurr and his warriors fought their way through the primary orbital bastion above Sulis, routing the secessionist Solar Auxilia regiment set as sentinels aboard it. The vengeful Salamanders crippled the complex gravity engine that held the bastion transfixed in orbit and left the station to descend in fiery destruction upon the golden palace-city of the system lords. When the *Ebon Drake* withdrew from the system, she left behind a world that could offer no threat to the Imperium, little knowing that this would later see it fall without a struggle into the hands of the Warmaster.

After Sulis, the information used to chart the movements of the *Ebon Drake* becomes more unreliable. Fragmentary log entries recovered from the wreck of the *Ebon Drake*, discovered years later during the Scouring, mention the unexplained disappearance of three Legiones Astartes crewman at the '*Oasis of Nightmares*' and a violent encounter with an unknown xenos craft of crystalline composition that left the *Ebon Drake* adrift for several days without power, but provide few concrete details. Likewise, the annals of the portmaster of Valthrudnir, a newly Compliant world near the galactic core, mention the sighting of '*a craft marked with the sigil of a great black dragon crewed by void-devils*', yet such sightings can rarely be directly tied to the *Ebon Drake*.

Of these varied partial accounts, perhaps the most interesting is from the chronicles of the IVth Legion, the Iron Warriors. The grand cruiser *Grim Paragon*, one of several craft left as sentinels over Olympia, was heavily

damaged after an encounter with a vessel of unidentified class bearing the markings of the Salamanders that approached Olympia seeking word of the battle at Isstvan.

At Anvilus, mighty bastion of the Mechanicum and foremost of the Great Crusade's storehouses of arms and armour, they found that the embers of discontent had burst into open civil war between factions of the Machine God's followers. Where the *Ebon Drake* came searching for resupply and repairs, they found only strife and war, the tech-adepts of that most mighty forge-fane having bent all of their arcane skills to the utter annihilation of their brethren, with little care for the fate of unfortunate bystanders. For those uninitiated into the mysteries of the Machine Cult, it was impossible to divine where either side stood in the wider galactic war, or to easily communicate their own affiliation, and the *Ebon Drake* quickly became a target for both factions.

Narrowly avoiding becoming embroiled in the titanic void duels between seemingly identical forces of Mechanicum siege-monitors; the vessel was bombarded by vox broadcasts of incoherent machine code, some interrogative missives from interchangeable steel-faced magos and others insidious code-djinn intended to subvert the systems of the *Ebon Drake*, leaving her helpless. Were it not for the unique engineering of the prototype vessel, such an assault would surely have succeeded; instead it merely served to cause confusion aboard the *Ebon Drake* as several non-essential systems suffered cascade failures. Diverting all available power to the *Ebon Drake's* over-sized drive core, Chaplain-Lieutenant Jurr set upon a course out-system, evading plasma carronade barrages from the Mechanicum monitors while his warriors fought to cleanse the vessel of the frenzied murder-servitors which had boarded the *Ebon Drake* during her momentary incapacitation.

By the time the *Ebon Drake* had reached a safe distance, where the translation back to the dubious safety of warp space could be attempted, she had sustained serious damage to her outer hull as well as to numerous internal systems. Worse still, the casualties sustained in this, the latest of many battles the ship's company had faced, left them dangerously short on uninjured warriors. Without refit and an influx of new fighters, the *Ebon Drake* would have little hope of completing her mission.

Drakken-Asca

Adapted from the ancient Proximan arts of divination and augury, the ritual known amongst some sects of the Promethean Cult as '*Reading the Dragon-bones*' was frowned upon by Vulkan himself, though never purged from its doctrines. Involving the inscribing of questions in archaic Nocturnean upon the bones of a Salamander drake and casting them into the heart of the forge, the patterns of discolouration etched upon the bones by the flames would foreshadow their resolution. Known in the ancient Nocturnean dialects of the northern polar regions as the Drakken-Asca, the '*Dragon's Ash Ritual*', it is a practice that skirts the very edges of Imperial doctrine.

Xiaphas Jurr was a known practitioner of the art, as were other members of the Igniax, as the Salamanders' order of Chaplains was known, and is thought to have relied extensively on the ritual during the *Ebon Drake's* mission to the Isstvan System. Indeed as that mission continued, records from various officers and ship's logs indicate that the Chaplain-Lieutenant become more and more obsessed with the Drakken-Asca ritual as well as other more obscure Proximan auguries as the ship neared Isstvan. This has been linked in other histories to his origin on Proximal, but is perhaps more telling of the grim despondency and malaise that fell upon so many Legionaries in the wake of Horus' betrayal and the disappearance of three of the Emperor's once immortal Primarchs.

For the Sake of the Dead

The next verifiable data on the *Ebon Drake* places her at Baal, the throneworld of the Blood Angels. The sons of Sanguinius had not been included in the fleet sent to seek redress from Horus after he was declared a traitor to the Imperium; in fact the majority of the IXth Legion had been marshalled and dispatched to Signus Prime on the far rim of the galaxy some years before on the orders of Horus himself. Their own Primarch, Sanguinius, would himself be counted among the missing until his fate was revealed in the later years of the Horus Heresy. All that remained to greet Xiaphas Jurr on Baal was a small garrison of the IXth Legion, under the command of the veteran Legionary Warden Arkhad.

The *Ebon Drake* limped into orbit around the fortress world of the IXth Legion, where her crew were able to secure space at an orbital dock for desperately needed repair and resupply. Playing host to a multitude of battered Imperial companies falling back from battlefields along the northern edge of the Imperium, Baal did not feel abandoned as did their own home world of Nocturne, yet even bustling with activity and a veritable host of Legiones Astartes from different Legions, it carried the same despondent air.

Baal granted Xiaphas Jurr his first chance to glean some hint of the tragedy at Isstvan, but even those few who had survived that battle could offer him little but fragmented and vague recollections. None could speak of the final fate of any of the fallen Primarchs, and many mourned their gene-fathers as lost, with no few surrogate tombs under construction at Baal in honour of those broken souls surrendered to the ranks of the dead.

Some few of their own brethren the company of the *Ebon Drake* found within the fortresses of Baal, readying themselves to stand alongside the Blood Angels should Horus dare to strike at Sanguinius' home world. Chief among them Praetor-Captain Kar'Tor, once numbered amongst the most valiant of Nocturne's sons and heir-designate to the Protectorate of Themis, City of Warlords, a warrior for whom Xiaphas Jurr held an abiding respect. However, the horrors of the battle at Isstvan V had left Kar'Tor broken of spirit, and when Chaplain-Lieutenant Jurr petitioned for able-bodied Salamanders to join the crew of the *Ebon Drake* in her mission, Kar'Tor grew wroth, forbidding any from joining the ship.

Despite Kar'Tor's rash orders and the grim sense of doom that had enveloped many of those now preparing to meet their end at Baal, thirty-eight Salamanders joined the *Ebon Drake's* crew, a group that had escaped Isstvan V aboard the Thunderhawk *Ohidoran*. These warriors of Nocturne brought with them seventeen battered but unbroken Raven Guard, led by a Legionary named Kirhane whose fresh wounds were evidence of the fury he had witnessed at Isstvan, and a trio of hulking Iron Hands cataphractii, all sworn to rejoin their own missing lords or die in the attempt.

Kar'Tor was not to be the only obstacle to their quest; Warden Arkhad, the Seneschal of Baal, while happy to welcome the *Ebon Drake* and her company to his world, was less keen to see a fully armed Legiones Astartes cruiser abandon its defences for what he saw as a suicide mission. Unwilling to acknowledge the importance of Jurr's mission or the validity of his orders, it was only the threat of the *Ebon Drake's* bombardment cannon turned on his defences that eventually persuaded Warden Arkhad to allow them to pass through the orbital defence grid. "*For the sake of the dead you have damned all those who now stand in the Emperor's name. Do not return to Baal; for you stand no less as traitors than those who now march under* Horus' *banner,*" were Arkhad's bitter parting words as the *Ebon Drake* left orbit of Baal. Silent in the face of Arkhad's denouncement, the crew of the *Ebon Drake* pondered the truth of his words as they translated once more into the Warp, passing ever closer to Isstvan, to the heart of the treachery that had befallen the Imperium and the final truth of their Primarch's fate.

He does not walk among the Dead

From the grim fortress of Baal, the *Ebon Drake* passed through the ever more turbulent currents of the Warp, directed to the distant star of Isstvan by her Navigator's deft hand and unfailing guidance. After leaving Baal, Xiaphas Jurr's journals indicate that he had thought to emerge once more at Port Maw, the Imperial navy's greatest anchorage along the Northern Fringe. However, in the wake of the incident at Baal, the Chaplain-Lieutenant decided to avoid further contact with the defenders of the Imperium, unknowingly avoiding translating into the midst of the Warmaster's fleet as it lay at anchor in the newly conquered docks of Port Maw.

Instead, the *Ebon Drake* held fast to her course towards Isstvan, braving the whirling ætheric vortex that scholars in these latter days believe was somehow summoned to form a cage around the northern-most systems of the Imperium, seeking not to bar passage but rather to contain something within its boundaries. Neither Navigator nor Astropath could pierce the veil this storm cast over the Isstvan System, yet the oaths sworn by her crew and the omens cast by Chaplain-Lieutenant Jurr in the flames of his votive forge forced the *Ebon Drake* onward despite the danger posed by such a voyage. Straining the protective geller field that protected them from the insanity of ætheric space, the *Ebon Drake* punched through the maelstrom and into the calm at its centre, the Isstvan System, where the damage sustained in their passage forced them to make an emergency translation at the system's edge.

Bursting forth from the bowels of the Warp, the *Ebon Drake* translated into realspace prepared for battle, all gun batteries armed and manned, and every warrior of the Legiones Astartes aboard sworn to death before any surrender to the forces of the arch-Traitor. Yet, where they had expected to find the marshalled fleets of the Warmaster and worlds remade as a monumental and vile shrine to his treachery, they found only the cold remains of a battle long since fought and forgotten.

In the gulf of space between the planets of the Isstvan System floated the hulks of those void craft of Legions, both Loyalist and Traitor, that were too damaged by combat to be easily salvaged, and on the cold surface of Isstvan V were only crude pits filled with the slain, all serviceable wargear long since stripped from their bodies. No vast armada waited on which they could vent their anger in valiant suicide and no grand palace had been raised to mark Horus' dominion over the world that was now the grave of Primarchs as a target for their wrathful pride. To those who have read the histories of the Horus Heresy, the actions of Horus amid the fringes of the Imperium, conquering and looting those worlds that remained loyal to the Emperor, are no doubt well known, but to the crew of the *Ebon Drake* they brought only more questions, none of which could be readily answered.

The *Ebon Drake* achieved high orbit over Isstvan V without incident, her crew more resentful of the absence of the enemy than relieved, as few among them could deny the sense of grim foreboding that their journey's end conjured within them. Despite the lack of opposition, it was some hours before any dropcraft left the *Ebon Drake's* hangar bays, for the sight of the lifeless, brutalised orb left in the wake of the Dropsite Massacre robbed all present of the flicker of hope that they might yet find the missing Primarchs alive. For three days they scoured the surface of the blasted planet; heavily-armed search parties roaming the dust plains almost at random, while in orbit Xiaphas Jurr cast augury after augury as he swept the *Ebon Drake's* sensors across the world in endless sweep-configurations. All they found was ruin, wreckage and the silent corpses of the dead; no sign did they ever find of the missing Primarchs Vulkan, Ferrus Manus and Corvus Corax, either living or dead.

Then on the third day, directed by the now feverish half-dreams of Xiaphas Jurr who had not rested since their departure from Baal, the *Ebon Drake's* sensors detected an anomaly buried beneath a glass plain that marked the Traitors' use of atomics to finish the massacre —an object of unknown composition and of significant mass— broadcasting an almost undetectable signal in an exotic wavelength known to certain strata of the Salamanders' command echelons. Lacking any heavy machinery suited to delicate excavations, the post-human crew of the *Ebon Drake* tore open the fused ground with their bare hands and combat blades, working without pause and in ominous silence for another day to unearth the hidden signal and its origin. Once uncovered, it took the combined might of the three Iron Hands cataphractii to heft it from the clutches of Isstvan V's hungry maw, where it had lain for over a standard year, and bring it once more into the light of day.

Though fused by unimaginable heat, scoured and blackened by atomic fire and abandoned to rot beneath the surface of a dead world, what they tore from the dark heart of Isstvan V was still unmistakably the sarcophagus of a Legion Mark IV Dreadnought, all its limbs but the stump of its right arm shorn away by the violence of its final battle. The ornate heraldry worked into what remained of the hull proclaimed the identity of the machine to the Salamanders present: Cassian Dracos, the last mortal man to hold the title Master of the XVIIIth Legion, and the shattered readouts of his sarcophagus proclaimed that he yet lived. There, on the barren grey surface of Isstvan V, surrounded by the unburied dead and the shattered wreckage of his Legion, Xiaphas Jurr, with trembling hands, connected the sarcophagus to an external vox unit and the haunting, hypnotic voice of a man twice dead rumbled forth over the assembled warriors of three orphaned Legions.

'You come seeking our father, but he is not here.

I searched for him on the field of battle until they struck me down with a sword of flame that scorched the very heavens, and yet I did not die.

I searched for him in the endless vaults of the dead where the crushing blackness tore at my very soul, and yet I endured.

I was tested once more in fire and in darkness, and passed again through the crucible, and I tell you this:

Vulkan does not walk among the dead!'

The Warmaster's Rage

Even as Cassian Dracos rose from the depths of Isstvan V, bringing some measure of hope to the beleaguered Loyalists, the annals of the Horus Heresy were to grant them no reprieve from the Warmaster's relentless onslaught. The records of those scholars and archivists in the service of the Warmaster, later captured by servants of the Emperor, speak of a vast armada assembling at Port Maw, but a relatively short distance from Isstvan. Port Maw, conquered by the forces of the Warmaster shortly after the outbreak of Mankind's civil war, was now the centre of a huge war machine gearing up for the conquest of all those dominions of the Emperor that refused to accept Horus as their rightful master. Here the assembled fleets of those Legions loyal to the Warmaster were refitted and repaired for the coming war, appropriating those resources once intended to supply the vast fleets of the Great Crusade.

Here the most recent of the Warmaster's proclamations had arrived, an order to destroy the defiant Forge World of Mezoa: an order so widely promulgated to the officers of his host that several illuminated copies of the manuscript exist to this day, preserved in the Imperial Archives of Terra. Two previous attempts to invade and conquer the Loyalist outpost had been turned back by the warlike magos of Mezoa, and at the time it had been deemed more strategically efficient to simply isolate it while the surrounding systems were dominated and a secure base for Horus' inevitable onslaught on the Imperial core was established. Now, as the vast hosts of the Warmaster readied themselves for the push on Terra, all potential weaknesses in their rear areas were to be eradicated so that all assets could be devoted to the battle for those systems at the core of Imperial space.

The conquest of Mezoa, however strategically important, would only be bought at a high cost in lives and materiel, and few of the commanders gathered at Port Maw were eager to so weaken their forces at such an early juncture in the war. Yet the order

conveyed by the Warmaster's emissary could not be ignored, and so a quiet war erupted within the confines of Port Maw, a war fought with lies, veiled threats and no few fatal confrontations as the various officers sought to see the mission assigned to their rivals. Recently returned to Port Maw after the disastrous failure at Fortress Stranivar, and lacking either influential patrons or a united officer cadre, it eventually fell to the 114th Grand Battalion of the Iron Warriors and the 78th Chapter of the Alpha Legion to prosecute the Mezoan campaign.

Autilon Skorr of the Alpha Legion, as the highest ranking officer amongst the units assigned to the campaign, was placed in overall command of it. Ambitious even in the wake of the failure at Stranivar and well aware of the enmity borne for him by most of the command elements of the 114th Grand Battalion, Consul-Delegatus Skorr used his authority as commander of the task force and its fleet to appropriate the lion's share of the available resources for his own Legion, leaving the Iron Warriors elements, commanded by Nârik Dreygur, little chance to recover from the losses of the Stranivar campaign. With the bulk of the Iron Warriors and their volatile lord, Perturabo, far distant and the other Legion commanders uninterested in the plight of a failed officer, Dreygur and his men had no option but to make what repairs they could.

Composed of a dozen capital class warships, including a pair of fearsome Mangonel class bombardment cruisers, 9,000 Legiones Astartes, three full Taghmata from the Forge World of M'Pandex and 20,000 auxiliary troops, the Mezoa task force was one of the largest battlegroups Horus assigned to independent command outside of his brother Primarchs listed in the chronicles of the early years of the Horus Heresy. More than that, victory in this campaign would have garnered the favour of Horus for its commanding officer, a commodity that would have become invaluable had the Warmaster completed his conquest. Departing in good order the fleet entered the Warp, assured by the Davinite priests assigned to their contingent of Navigators that the passage would be swift and sure, and cleared of all storms. Within a few short days of the arrival of the *Ebon Drake* at Mezoa, the Traitor fleet would be in a position to begin the assault.

Unto the Crucible of War

With the recovery of Cassian Dracos, new hope awoke in those who had come to Isstvan. Once again they moved with the purpose and easy camaraderie of warrior-brothers rather than the grim brooding of previous days. Even those of the Iron Hands and Raven Guard who accompanied them, for whom Dracos could offer no words of prophecy, were heartened by the thought that where one Primarch had survived so might others. Few among the company doubted the words of Cassian Dracos for even a moment, such was the awe inspired by the history of his deeds and the near-impossible means of his survival. He was installed upon the *Ebon Drake* with all haste, where his Vulkan-forged shell began to slowly restore his systems without outside aid, a tech-miracle that served only to bolster his growing legend.

Despite his long, unsleeping entombment beneath Isstvan, Dracos refused all offers of a return to the slumber that most Dreadnoughts, especially one of his age, craved. Though clearly changed in aspect by his ordeal and often lost to extended periods of near-incoherent prognostication and memories of his centuries of battle, he quickly came to exert a palpable influence over the company of the *Ebon Drake*. Many of the ship's company came to him to receive wisdom and prophecy, both from amongst the Salamanders and those of their brother Legions that were present. In the few short days the *Ebon Drake* spent in orbit of Isstvan V after the recovery of Dracos, the Legiones

The Prophecies of the Flames

The initial words and later pronouncements of Cassian Dracos were recorded both by the *Ebon Drake's* vox system and in the personal logs of many of the crew, and later assembled by the hand of Xiaphas Jurr into the tome now referred to as '*The Prophecies of the Flames*'. This tome became the core of the creed promulgated by Chaplain-Lieutenant Jurr and was adopted by the so called Disciples of the Flames, the band of Legiones Astartes who followed him during the Horus Heresy. Jurr himself adopts the title '*Prophet of Fire*' in later iterations of the tome, penned in the darkest days of Mankind's civil war.

Though deemed both seditious and of extreme moral danger during the Scouring, some few copies still remain in the sealed libraries of Terra and were made available to the author during the penning of this history. These documents, and the many personal notations recorded by Xiaphas Jurr and others of the crew of the *Ebon Drake*, have been most helpful in reconstructing both the events of that time and the mental state of many of those involved.

Astartes aboard swiftly began to display a new form of heraldry, myriad devotional icons applied with the care of dedicated craftsmen in honour of the venerable Dreadnought, and a new title is noted in many log entries, applied to those who sat in attendance on Dracos: the Disciples of the Flames.

It was not just the human crew who fell under the strange charisma of the twice-dead Dreadnought: the servitors and simple automata that performed many of the ship's more mundane functions became unreliable in his presence. Many of the service-automata had to be forcibly removed from the chamber where he rested after developing anomalous routines in their neural-cortexes, while a number of high-grade servitors detached themselves from duty in the Armorium to operate as attendants to the Dreadnought, seemingly without orders. No explanation for these events is recorded in any official log retrieved from the *Ebon Drake*, indeed, it seems unlikely that any real attempt was made by the crew to fully investigate the phenomenon.

Those command logs recovered in later years show that when the *Ebon Drake* departed Isstvan V, it was Cassian Dracos, the Dragon Revenant, who commanded her course and that of those who now followed him. With their original mission, Lord Keeper Rhy'Tan's charge to investigate Isstvan V, now complete, many of the crew's company expected a triumphant return to Nocturne, yet Dracos would not allow such a course to be plotted. Instead the inscrutable Dreadnought, still little more than a semi-coherent metal shell, insisted they set course for the Forge World of Mezoa, and few among the crew voiced objection. The *Ebon Drake* translated once again to the tempestuous seas of the Warp only a few short days after the retrieval of Cassian Dracos, never to return to the silent grave that the Isstvan System had become.

However, the situation at Mezoa was far more grim than they had anticipated. The mighty Forge World, a glowing ember encircled by a dense ring of orbital stations and ordnance satellites, was besieged by a Traitor armada intent on stopping any craft from approaching or leaving the beleaguered Loyalist fortress. Emerging at the very outermost edges of the Mezoan System, the *Ebon Drake* broke from the depths of warp space into the heart of a chaotic void battle, with squadrons of heavy cruisers marked by the sigils of the Iron Warriors and Alpha Legion striving to gain local space superiority over a rag-tag fleet of craft bearing insignia ranging from marred Legion icons and Imperial navy markings, to the eternal flame symbol of Mezoa itself.

As void craft of both sides fought and died, the titanic explosions that marked their passing lighting up the void like miniature suns and shaking the *Ebon Drake* with their blast-waves, the crew of the lone Salamanders cruiser strove to make sense of the jumbled web of identification signals broadcast by the combatants. Several tense seconds passed as the ship's command crew established friend and foe, a period of time that left them vulnerable to any number of deadly strikes. It was only the confusion sowed amongst the enemy by the *Ebon Drake's* sudden arrival that forestalled their immediate destruction. With the enemy marked, the *Ebon Drake* let loose its weapons batteries, manoeuvring to join the Loyalist fleet that stood sentinel over Mezoa, a fleet that was at a serious numerical disadvantage to their foe.

The battle above Mezoa continued to rage for nine long hours, both sides locked in bloody stalemate as the Traitor admirals spent the lives of their ships to grind down their opponents. Hampered by the fractured nature of their fleet, with the various detachments of craft answering only to their own lords and no other, the Loyalists were eventually forced to abandon orbital space around Mezoa, pulling back to the outer planets to regroup. Some few ships amongst the fleet, including the *Ebon Drake*, risked crippling fire to close with Mezoa one last time and release flights of dropcraft, and of the half dozen Legion and navy craft to attempt the manoeuvre, only three rose once again from the Forge World. With the retreat of the Loyalist armada, there was no force left to stop the wallowing troop barges and heavy cruisers of Horus' host as they took up station over Mezoa and began to sweep its skies clear of defence platforms and killsats. The final invasion of Mezoa had begun.

Exposed and Measured

Even as the bombardment cruisers and troop transports of the Alpha Legion and Iron Warriors moved into position high above Mezoa, Cassian Dracos, some measure of mobility restored to his Dreadnought shell by the arcane self-repair systems Vulkan had invested it with, led his Disciples of the Flames into the central forge-fane of Mezoa. There, the twice-dead master of the XVIIIth Legion met with the Norn-regents of Mezoa, a triad of ancient magos-sisters so interlinked by complex neural interface technology that they formed a single intelligence which directed the vast fiefdom of Mezoa. Their meeting is immortalised in the data-archives of Mezoa, the fire-blackened and battered shell of the Dragon Revenant confronting the emaciated forms of the Norn-regents, each of the three suspended spider-like in the complex web of technology that linked them to thralls across Mezoa, and flanked by a cohort of towering Domitar-automata. Yet at Dracos' approach the emotionless war machines fell back in halting steps, and even the stern trio of venerable tech-magi seemed taken aback.

There the ancient Terran warlord spoke of his visions, of the trials he had endured as he lay entombed within the dark heart of Isstvan V and of his search for Vulkan; a tale of woe and sacrifice that echoed the

schismatic creed honoured by the magos of Mezoa. This simple similarity of belief seems a slim basis for the accord that followed, with Cassian Dracos feted as a living avatar of the Machine God by the dour tech-adepts of Mezoa, granted high station in the Taghmata formed for its defence and marked as a sign of impending victory. Later, scholars have wondered at the sudden acceptance Dracos met with the diverse groups he encountered, some even positing that Isstvan's position at the heart of one of the greatest warp storms ever encountered may have had an effect on the entombed Dreadnought more significant than previously thought.

Attended by the most skilled of Mezoa's forge wrights, Cassian Dracos withdrew to the hidden depths of Mezoa, there to receive the benedictions of the Machine God and be restored to his former glory. With the dropcraft of the Traitor forces blackening the sky with their numbers even as their lord retired, Xiaphas Jurr led the Disciples of the Flames as they joined the warriors who stood ready to defend Mezoa. With them were the cybernetic monsters and towering automata of the Taghmata Mezoa, all veterans of centuries of xenos raids, as well as the 891st Lethe Cohort of the Solar Auxilia, and forty-eight Imperial Fists Legionaries whose flight from the fighting on Manachea had left them stranded at Mezoa. In total, some 12,000 men-under-arms and took up positions to repel the coming storm, including a great mass of combat-automata, soul-shorn adsecularis auxilia and Knights of House Hermetika.

Of the earliest stages of the third invasion of defiant Mezoa, the greatest wealth of information comes from the war chronicles of Nârik Dreygur, de-facto commander of the Iron Warriors 114th Grand Battalion. The first wave of the invasion was a vast throng of drop ships carrying thousands upon thousands of pact-conscripts from Moab and turncoat Imperial Army troopers, all considered eminently expendable by Autilon Skorr and the other commanders of the Traitor armada. These fallen souls were met not by the blast of defence cannon or flights of slaved Mechanicum drone-interceptors, but by the wrath of Mezoa itself, as the great subduction furnaces sunk into the planet's volatile mantle were used to hurl vast projectiles of magma and bedrock skyward. Against such weapons the Traitor dropcraft had no protection, and casualties were devastating, indeed the tactical purpose of this first wave seems to have been more to provoke just such an attack as to establish a true beachhead. Those few drop ships that made it to the ash-choked surface of Mezoa were quickly decimated by cohorts of vicious Vorax battle-automata, the few survivors scattered into the hellish interior of Mezoa where none are known to have survived.

Having correctly anticipated that the Mezoan adepts could not maintain a constant bombardment without compromising the tectonic stability of their own world, Autilon Skorr dispatched the 114th Grand Battalion as the core of the second wave. Grounding amid the corpses and blackened wreckage of the first wave, Dreygur and the grim veterans of the Iron Warriors, having weathered the more conventional anti-aircraft fire with minimal losses, were informed by Autilon Skorr of the Alpha Legion that any attempts to evacuate the planet's surface would be met by the guns of the fleet. With no option but victory, the Iron Warriors and those auxiliaries landed alongside them met the onrushing Loyalist counter-attack, quickly converting their drop ships into makeshift bastions. The battlefield lit by erupting magma-geysers and blanketed by Mezoa's ever-present ash clouds, the Iron Warriors fought with a ferocity that equalled any of Angron's berserker Legionaries, demanding a steep price in lives for each of them who fell. In the climactic battle of the first day, Nârik Dreygur fought and slew Valtus Moran, a champion of the Imperial Fists, who had reached Mezoa, the battle-automata under his command tearing apart his corpse as the Loyalist forces quit the field.

The Iron Warriors had paid in the lives of their brethren to secure a safe landing zone for the remainder of the Traitor armada, and soon the ash plains at the edges of the great forge-fanes of Mezoa were awash in the footsoldiers of the Warmaster. Sokar class stormbirds, among the largest craft that could be safely landed on the fragile surface of Mezoa, were used to project an interconnected canopy of void shields above the vast encampment, a shield that was regularly tested by the ground-shaking impact of slabs of lava-coated bedrock. With both sides firmly entrenched, the Traitor forces used their advantage in numbers to press the attack on Mezoa's forge-fanes and their artillery trains, attempting to reduce the walls and fortifications to rubble from afar, while Autilon Skorr drove his massed auxilia into the breaches to force a hole in the defences. The Iron Warriors were committed wherever the enemy seemed strongest, suffering mounting casualties to blunt the ferocious assault of the Mezoan magos' automata cohorts, while the Alpha Legion operated as headhunters and raiders, taking advantage of the distraction provided by the massed assaults of their fellows to strike at vulnerable command installations and isolated command units.

The Flame Eternal

The Forge World of Mezoa has long been home to an exotic variant of the Cult of the Machine God, in part due to the reluctance of the Lucien Forge to participate in its founding. Commanded by the Emperor to establish an outpost to supply the ever expanding Great Crusade with heavy ordnance and other essential supplies, the orthodox magisters of Lucius seized the opportunity to rid themselves of a growing aberrant sect within their ranks. These schismatics were to be found in the remote Forge World of Mezoa, where their obscure creed evolved under the pressure of constant war and intermixed with the quixotic beliefs of the nearby Knight House of Hermetika. Over the years of their semi-exile from the other great Forges of the Mechanicum, this creed became the Path of the Flame Eternal.

The Loyalist forces did not sit idle while Autilon Skorr prosecuted his assault. While the heavy infantry of the Lethe Solar Auxilia units and Mechanicum siege-automata held the walls of Mezoa's spired forge-fanes, the Disciples of the Flames, operating in demi-companies of fifty men and reinforced by the remaining Imperial Fists, engaged in a series of spoiling attacks. As these assault forces sallied forth from the protection of the heavily fortified defences, the tech-adepts of Mezoa collapsed entire regions of the planet's crust, burying sections of the enemy's lines in tidal waves of magma and allowing the Legiones Astartes to engage isolated pockets of the foe. Elsewhere, suicide cohorts of automata and adsecularis drew detachments of the Traitor host out into the open where the tech-magi could obliterate friend and foe alike with blasts of magma.

As with all things, the Mechanicum adepts of Mezoa kept detailed records of the fallen, both allied and enemy, the resulting equations informing all of their strategies, and despite the small victories that had been claimed against the Traitor horde, the cold logic of war did not favour Mezoa.

An Oath Fulfilled

For nine days Autilon Skorr directed the Traitor host in an unrelenting siege of the spired halls of Mezoa. Bombardment cruisers in high orbit rained down kinetic cluster munitions, and the Mezoan tech-priests responded with the white-hot blood of Mezoa itself, launching chunks of the mantle skyward and filling the air with fragments of burning rock. The already torturous landscape of Mezoa buckled, venting scalding clouds of ash and steam that scoured entire battlefields clean, and tides of magma that engulfed armoured columns. Autilon Skorr brought hell to Mezoa.

From the fortified walls of the Mezoan forge-fanes, Xiaphas Jurr and the remaining Disciples of the Flames bore witness to the slow reduction of the Forge World's defences. With no hope of reinforcement, isolated as Mezoa was by the expansion of Horus' dark empire, there seemed little hope of victory. Despite this, it was quickly made obvious that regardless of the inescapable logic of their defeat, the defenders of Mezoa had no intention of surrendering. The Norn-regents had decreed that until the last automata fell, the battle for Mezoa would not end. Each Traitor attack was met by stubborn resistance, and while defeat might be inevitable, it would not be swift in arriving, a fact that would ill-please the Warmaster. This truth was not unknown to Autilon Skorr who, like most of the ambitious Legion officers that had thrown in their lot with the Warmaster, was eager to join the assault on Terra. Rather than wait for the eventual fall of Mezoa, Autilon Skorr intended to bring the Forge World to its knees with a single strike, hoping that the swift fall of the Loyalist Forge World would secure him a return to the favour of both Horus and his own inscrutable Primarch.

The remains of the Iron Warriors 114th Grand Battalion were committed en masse to a frontal assault on the defences of Tertial-05, one of the key defence bastions on the outskirts of the main forge spire. The attack went ahead despite the protests of Consul Dreygur of the Iron Warriors, who only agreed to lead his men at the assurance of Autilon Skorr that the Alpha Legion would support the assault. The Iron Warriors struck the defences of Tertial-05 like a hammer blow, waves of heavy infantry advancing under heavy fire unflinchingly despite the casualties inflicted upon them. The assault quickly drew in defending units from across the battle zone, as Loyalist commanders reinforced the weakening defences. As the fighting ground on, the Iron Warriors were eventually brought to a halt, bogged down amongst the outer defences of Tertial-05 and surrounded by Loyalist units in a murderous crossfire. Dreygur ordered his warriors to set up makeshift defences and dig in in the Loyalist positions they had captured, his automata cohorts moving to counter-attack wherever the Loyalists threatened to overwhelm the thinning Iron Warriors lines. Encoded vox-signals, later retrieved and deciphered by the magos of Mezoa, were transmitted to the Alpha Legion, calling on them to begin the second wave of the assault, but no answer was ever received by the embattled Iron Warriors who could not survive without support.

Autilon Skorr and his Alpha Legion headhunter cohorts were already beginning their own attack on the main spindle-spires of the Mezoan forge. With the majority of the Loyalist forces drawn away to engage the Iron Warriors' assault, and the Alpha Legion units still relatively intact, having been spared the brunt of the fighting, the Alpha Legion infiltrators were quickly able to annihilate the depleted automata maniples in their path and mount a direct assault on the central chambers of the Mezoan forge-fane, endangering the Norn-regents themselves.

All that stood in their path were a few dozen Domitar class battle-automata, and though fearsome engines of war, they could not last against the sheer numbers of Alpha Legion troops now loose within the defences. There were also some fifty of the Disciples of the Flames present within the central halls as an honour guard to Cassian Dracos, whose battered form was still sealed within the fabrication vaults, but these warriors had received strict orders from Dracos to guard the vaults, sparing no men for the battle raging but a short distance from them. Disobeying these orders, some few of the Disciples, led by the Raven Guard Kirhane, did join the defence of the Norn-regent, holding the great spoked portals of the chambers as a horde of multi-limbed servitors struggled to evacuate the Norn-regents. Yet despite their efforts, Autilon Skorr himself and a score of his personal guard were able to penetrate the hall, bringing down one of the great Norn-regents with lascutters and meltaguns.

With the death of one of the triad of ancient tech-magos that exerted complete control over Mezoa, utter chaos was loosed among the defenders. Battle-automata either lapsed into catatonic collapse or flew into berserk and fratricidal fury, while the Skitarii and thallax cohorts found themselves cut off from all external direction. Traitor units surged forwards to attack all across the war zone, and only at Tertial-05, where the Solar Auxilia and the Disciples of the Flames held the Iron Warriors in a grim crossfire, was the enemy kept in check. It seemed that the end had arrived for Mezoa.

It was at this moment that Dracos returned to the fray, emerging from the fabrication vaults restored to his former splendour by the arts of Mezoa's forge wrights. Yet rather than lend his strength against Autilon Skorr and the Alpha Legion warriors ransacking the

central spires of Mezoa, he led those of the Disciples of the Flames who remained at his side towards Tertial-05 and the Iron Warriors. As the ancient Dreadnought charged forth, those automata he passed were pulled along in his wake, shaken from whatever feedback-induced mania had seized their cortex and slaved to the indomitable will of the Iron Dragon. With flames erupting all across the spires of Mezoa, Cassian Dracos reached the shell-scarred battlefield of Tertial-05 at the head of nearly 1,000 battle-automata. Yet rather than leading a charge into the remaining Iron Warriors, now entrenched in a formidable makeshift fortress of broken rockcrete and iron, he approached alone, calling on the enemy commander to show himself. Dracos passed through the ranks of the Iron Warriors' bound automata, the machines refusing all orders to engage him, and confronted Nârik Dreygur, who stood tall upon the fortifications. What passed between the two is largely unknown, however *The Prophecies of the Flames* records that *'Wheresoever is found the craft of the forge, the avatar of our lord Vulkan has power, even in the works of the enemy, even in the flesh of the enemy where it has felt the touch of the forge. So he turned foe to the cause of righteousness.'*

The private journals of Consul Dreygur do not speak of the incident; in fact after that day he made no more private recordings and eschewed all company save that of Dracos and his automata. What is known is that as the two met, they exchanged some few words and Dreygur turned to address his men, speaking but a few words:

'Brothers, once more an oath to us stands broken. The Alpha Legion has abandoned us once again. Now we shall show that we do not renege on our vows. The dead of Stranivar and Mezoa both call for vengeance, and we shall grant it to them.'

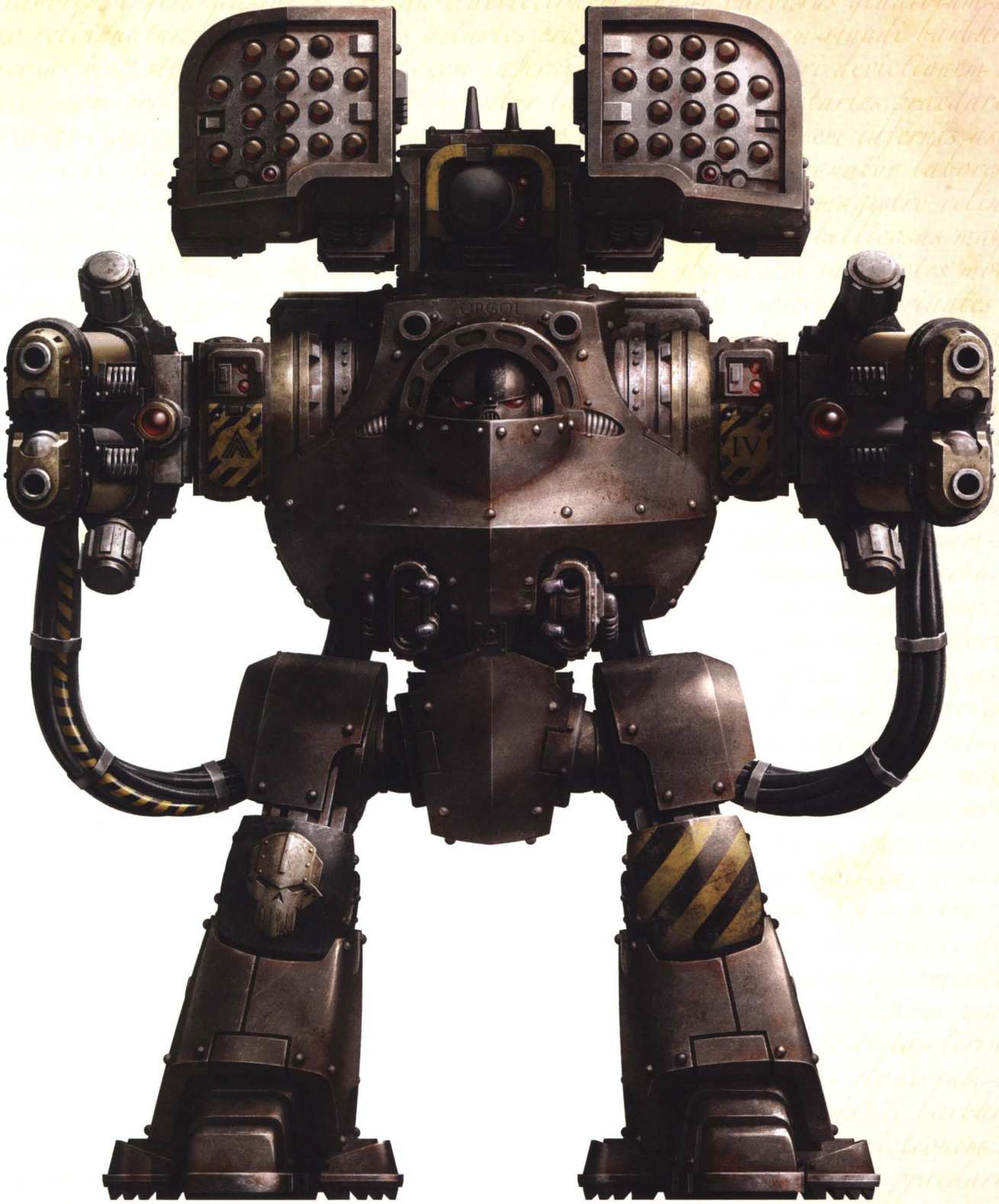
That which Remains

With victory within his grasp, Autilon Skorr found himself trapped at the centre of the Mezoan forge spires. At his back were the battle-automata and auxilia cohorts of the Mezoan priesthood, now returning to the control of their overlords, and to his fore an onrushing horde of automata and Loyalist Legiones Astartes warriors, with the remains of the Iron Warriors that had once fought under his command at their head. His rear areas and landing zones were under direct assault by Solar Auxilia armoured columns, and in space above Mezoa, the Loyalist squadrons had emerged from hiding amongst the moons of the outer planets to strike at the Traitors' cruisers, now dispersed in optimal bombardment positions, and unprepared for any attack.

The Battle for Mezoa was lost. Skorr's daring gamble had failed and now threatened to see him defeated in detail by the Loyalist forces. Within the space of a few hours, most of the Traitor forces on Mezoa were destroyed, the automata of Mezoa showing no mercy to the defeated. Less than 3,000 of the enemy escaped to return to the cruisers waiting above, including a badly wounded Autilon Skorr, one arm smashed after an encounter with Xiaphas Jurr during the retreat from the forge-fanes of Mezoa. While the Traitors retained orbital superiority, high speed passes and raids by Loyalist squadrons, and blazing chunks of the planet itself launched from below, soon forced them to retreat to the outer planets, and then from the system entirely. Cassian Dracos was hailed by some as the saviour of Mezoa and mistrusted by others for both the strange orders issued during the siege and his unseemly influence over automata and certain sects of the Mechanicum's priesthood itself. He was to lead a number of bloody raids against neighbouring systems now under the control of the Warmaster, raids which would spread the influence of the cult of personality that sprang up around him in the wake of the victory at Mezoa. Nârik Dreygur was to become a close confidant of the Iron Dragon, rarely seen except in his presence, a silent and brooding warrior who would serve as Cassian Dracos' right hand throughout the wars of the Horus Heresy.

Yet even though the invasion had failed, the damage to Mezoa was great. Autilon Skorr and his Alpha Legion warriors had caused severe damage during their battles at the forge's heart, leaving it incapable of easily replacing the losses sustained during the fighting. Worse yet, one of the three governing tech-priests, the Norn-regents, had been slain during the fighting, causing much strife amongst the various Mezoan orders as they struggled to re-adjust. While Mezoa would remain free from the Warmaster's control, it would be unable to provide any substantial assistance to other Loyalist enclaves for the duration of the conflict. It did, however, remain a thorn in the side of the Traitor efforts to push on the Imperium's core, providing a safe haven for various independent companies of Legiones Astartes, most operating under the aegis of the Disciples of the Flames. While many in the Divisio Militaris at the time of the Horus Heresy discounted the effectiveness of such companies, the exploits of the Disciples of the Flames and other notable groups were perhaps key in preserving a number of Loyalist strongholds and delaying the Warmaster's inevitable strike at Terra and the heart of the Imperium.

Nârik Dreygur,
The Gravewalker



Iron Warriors Deredeo Pattern Dreadnought

Ancient Orgol

Vanguard Echelon, 114th Grand Battalion

Battle of Mezoa, Tertial-05 Breakout

Long known amongst the Iron Warriors of the oft-maligned 114th Grand Battalion as a consummate survivor and one of the few among the Legion's early ranks given to independent action and a mastery of reconnaissance actions, Sor Orgol walked untouched from the fires of the Great Crusade and passed through the Legion's trial at Perturabo's hands and at Isstvan, only to fall at Fortress Stranivar, his seeker detachment abandoned by the Alpha Legion elements placed in support. Interred in the armoured shell of a Deredeo pattern Dreadnought, Orgol became a sentinel at the back of his battle-brothers, obsessing over operational deployments and the possibility of betrayal, his twinned hellfire plasma cannon ready to support both advance and retreat. On Mezoa, when the Gravewalker called the 114th to deliver on his oath of vengeance against the Alpha Legion, Orgol was at the forefront of the charge.

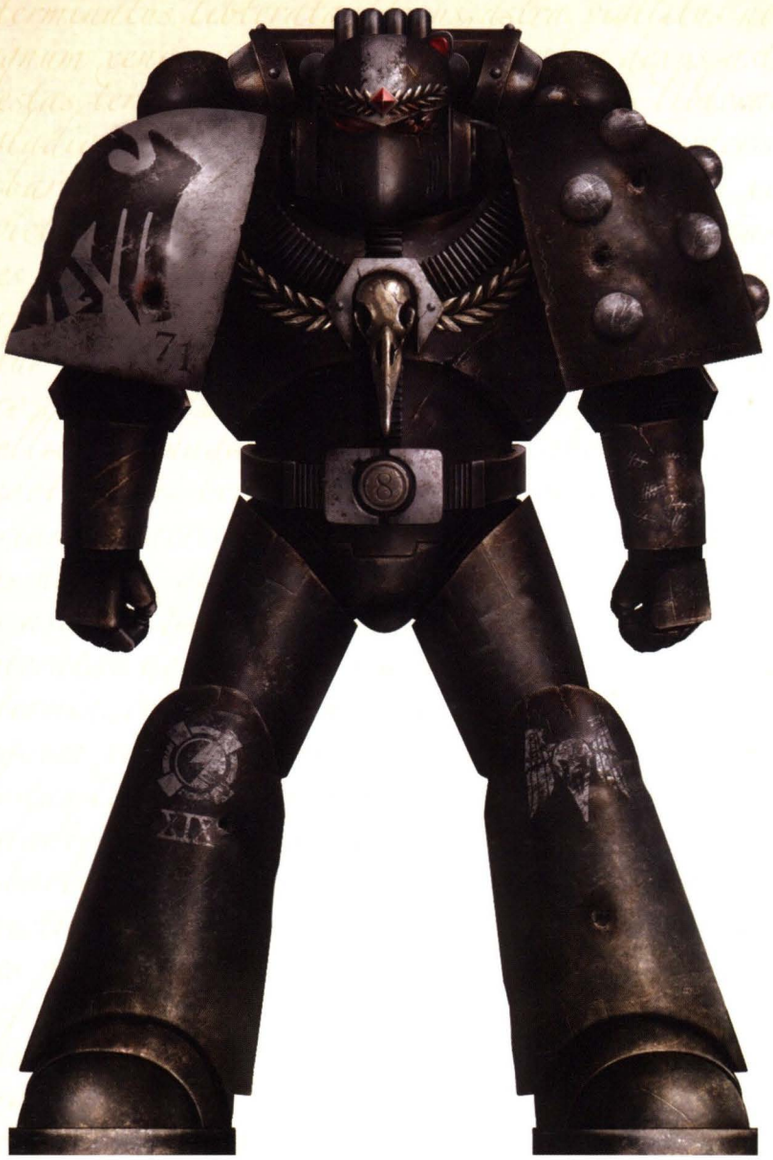
Raven Guard Recon Legionary

Veteran Legionary Aleckto Kirhane
First Recon Detachment, 7th Chapter
Company of the Ebon Drake

Hundreds of thousands of Loyalist Legiones Astartes fell upon the killing fields of Isstvan and three Primarchs were presumed dead at the hands of their brothers. In the midst of such unimaginable death and destruction, barely a handful of loyal warriors escaped, and none who endured the terrible events of those black days was unmarked by the tragedy. Of his entire chapter, the 7th, known informally as the '*Stormcrows*', only Kirhane and a dozen others survived. Kirhane is pictured here in the early stages of the battle, before a Traitor autocannon tore off his left leg below the knee and consigned him to watch the treacherous end of that battle from a medicae encampment.

Kirhane left Isstvan V at the controls of the Salamanders Thunderhawk *Ohidoran*, the original crew having disembarked to die with their brothers on the battlefield and allow the walking wounded to escape. The *Ohidoran* then found refuge aboard the cruiser *Warlock* as it fought free of the orbital battle.

Caught in the swirling realm of the Warp, the *Warlock* and its passengers were consigned to a long and treacherous odyssey as they sought a bastion of those still loyal. After seven months of voyaging on the malicious tides of the Warp, the *Warlock* finally came to rest at Baal, finding at last a world where loyal servants of the Emperor still held true to their vows. Yet, though it provided refuge from Horus' onslaught, it granted the survivors of Isstvan no succour.



XIXth Legion Insignia. Note the Inscribed Chapter and Company Numerals.

Ceramite bonding stud reinforcement

Iron Warriors Tactical Legionary

Legionary Ker Thelon
3rd Shock Assault Detachment,
114th Grand Battalion
Battle of Mezoa

Newly inducted into the Grand Battalion shortly before the beginning of the Mezoa campaign as one of the few replacement warriors granted the mauled formation, Legionary Thelon did not suffer through the betrayals heaped upon his new brothers by the Alpha Legion. He and those few others that were seconded to the unit remained staunchly loyal both to their Primarch and the Warmaster, held in thrall by the rushed hypno-indoctrination of their training and shunned by much of the 114th for it.

In the grim, fire-scoured landing zones and the long siege of Mezoa's forge spires, Ker Thelon and his brothers saw their baptism of fire; part of a growing breed of Legiones Astartes whose sole experience of war was the brutal attrition of Legionary against Legionary. Surviving where many others fell, Legionary Thelon soon acquired an impressive tally of kills, and by the time of Autilon Skorr's last push on the forge-fanes of Mezoa, he had risen to the rank of senior sergeant among the 3rd Shock Assault Detachment and was a vocal rival of Nârik Dreygur.

With the events of the final climactic battle of that campaign, Legionary Thelon and many of his confederates disappeared from the roster of the 114th Grand Company. No record of their fall in the final battle exists, nor any official mention of sanction against them by either Nârik Dreygur or the Loyalist Legiones Astartes that he chose to side with.

Standardised Line Infantry Markings for the 114th Grand Battalion

IVth Legion Insignia, No Deviation from Standard Patterns

Disciple of the Flames

Legionary Soh'rek Shaan
Honour Guard of Xiaphas Jurr,
Prophet of the Flame
Company of the Ebon Drake

In the wake of the revelations bestowed upon the company of the *Ebon Drake* at Isstvan V by Cassian Dracos, a stark change overcame its complement of Legiones Astartes. Many began to adopt the obscure divinatory practice of their commander Xiaphas Jurr's home world of Proximal, affixing the resulting charms to their armour, while others covered the original heraldry of their armour with devotional scenes depicting the Primarch or Cassian Dracos, who many consider his avatar.

Legionary Shaan is typical of the Legiones Astartes who arrived at Mezoa, and much changed in appearance from the spartan Salamanders heraldry he wore at the outset of the *Ebon Drake's* voyage. Much of his original drab green armour has been obscured by patterns of black ash and fire, along with ritual images of the Dragon Revenant and Vulkan. Suspended on chains across his armour are engraved bones and fragments of the armour of the fallen from Isstvan V, each an omen of events yet to pass, cast in the presence of the Iron Dragon himself. Suspended from his pauldrons are pages from the writings of Xiaphas Jurr, the so-called *Prophecies of the Flame*, some affixed with the seal of the Forge World of Mezoa.

As with many of the Disciples of the Flames, the final fate of Soh'rek Shaan is unknown outside of the inner ranks of the secretive clades of the Terran Archivists, and the tales of his exploits under the banner of the Dragon Revenant have been cleansed even from the records of the Salamanders themselves.

Legion Insignia replaced by devotional images of the Primarch Vulkan.

XVIIIth Legion Insignia. Note the subtle corruption wrought by the influence of Cassian Dracos.

Ancient Nehalen, 'The Interitus'

Personal Bodyguard Cadre of Autilon Skorr

Battle for Mezoa

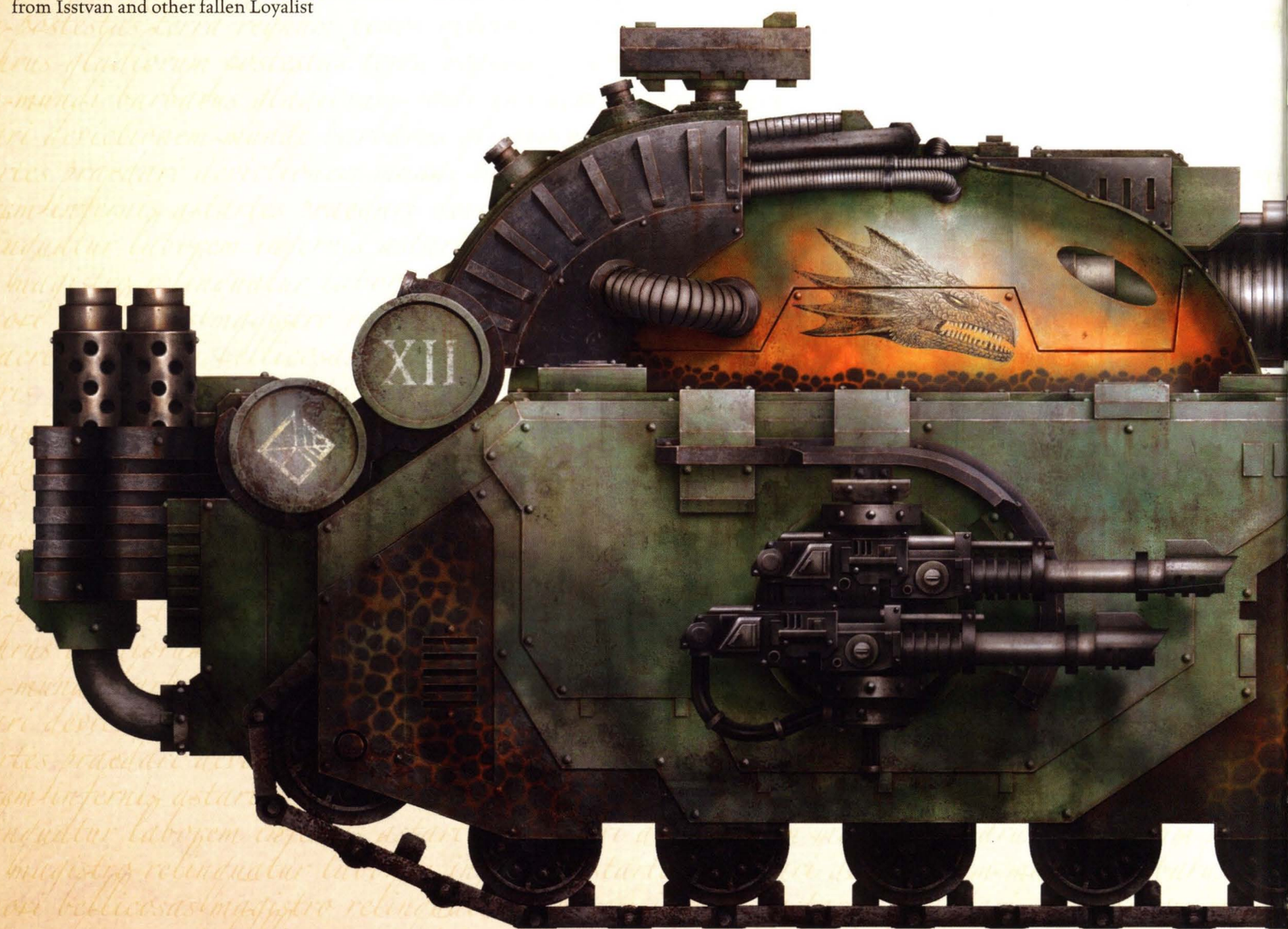
Renowned among the Alpha Legion for his exploits as a member of the Legion's Destroyer cadre in days long since passed, Nehalen earned for himself the title '*Interitus*' for his brutal methods—the fear of his deployment to a war zone a more potent deterrent than a full company of lesser warriors. Following a cataclysmic encounter with the Fra'al, Nehalen was confined to the metal shell of a Contemptor class Dreadnought, a transition that barred him from the infiltration missions that had once been his speciality and kindled in him a cold fury and appetite for open slaughter that exceeded his fellows. On Mezoa he served as Autilon Skorr's bodyguard and enforcer, delivering many of the suicidal edicts of the Alpha Legion commander to the Iron Warriors under his command. He was to meet his final end in combat with Cassian Dracos, the Dragon Revenant finally ending his cruel existence in a brawl that levelled an entire sub-section of the Mezoan forge-fane.

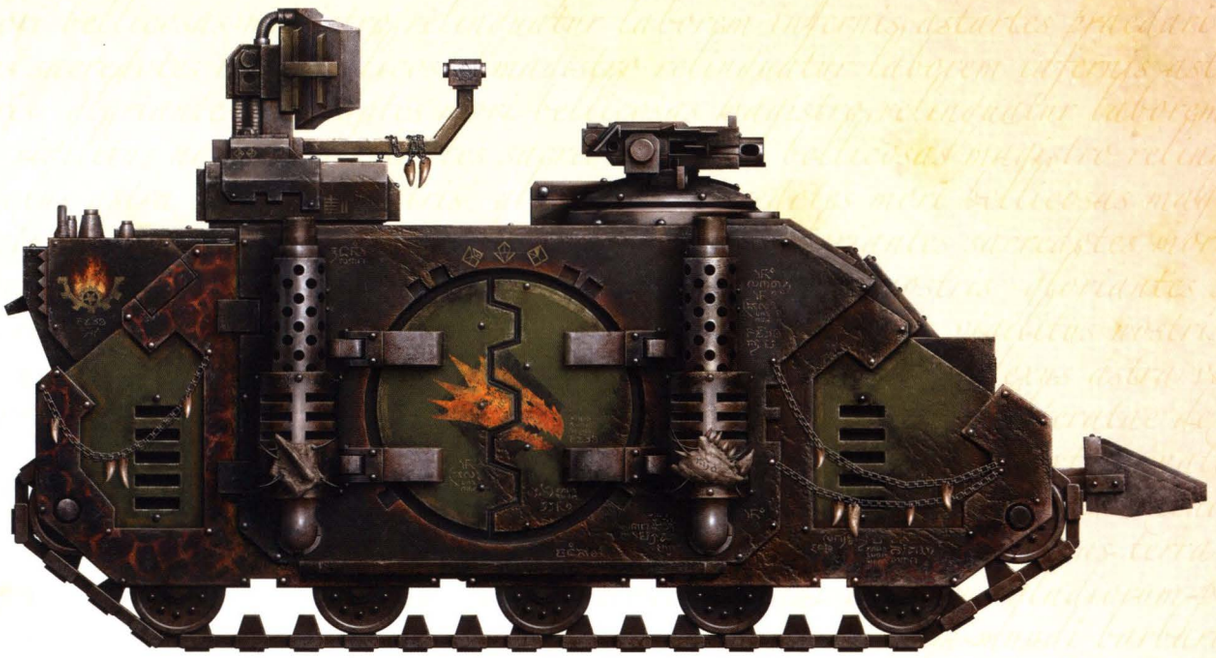
The Gift of Mezoa

Established as a way station for the Great Crusade and the ever-expanding armies of the Emperor's attempt to reunite the worlds of the galaxy under his rule, Mezoa had ever been dedicated to the construction of war machines for the Legiones Astartes and many other branches of the Imperial armies. Under the watchful eyes of the Tech-adepts of the Eternal Flame, uncounted armoured vehicles were produced for the Emperor's finest warriors, yet with the advent of the Horus Heresy, all supply routes to those enclaves known to have remained loyal were cut off. Left with no means to disburse these armaments, the artificers of Mezoa placed them into the vast storage vaults beneath their forge-fanes to await the day when their anger would be unleashed against the Traitors.

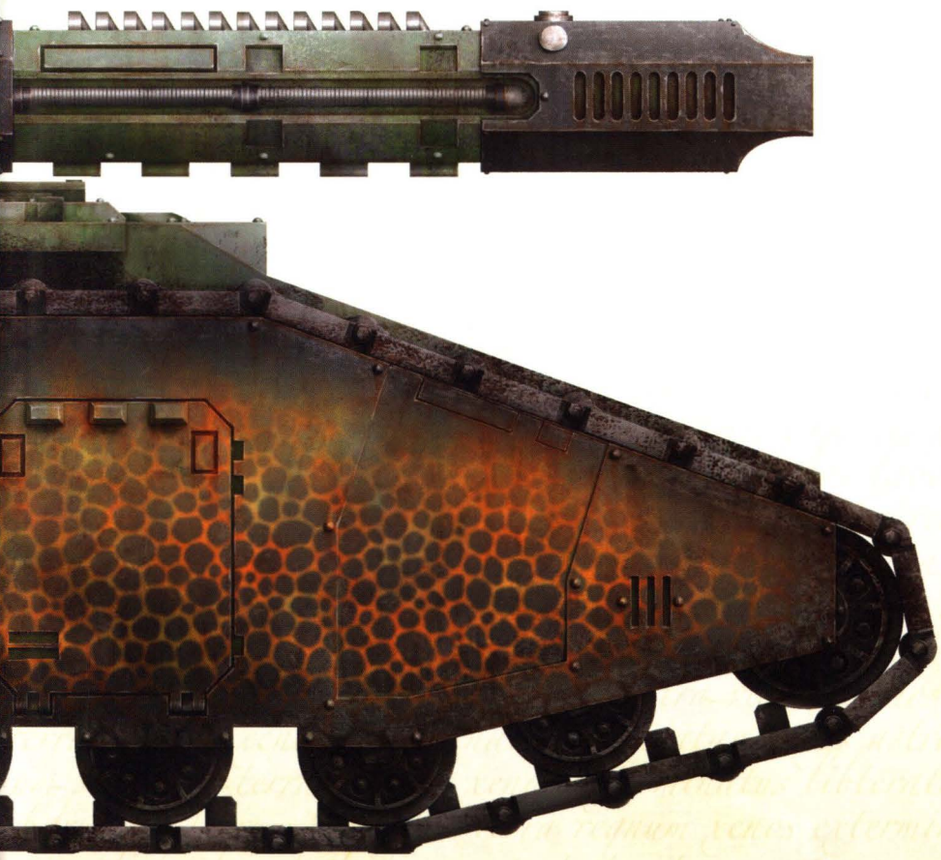
With the arrival of Cassian Dracos and the *Ebon Drake*, alongside other fleeing stragglers from Isstvan and other fallen Loyalist strongholds, these found new purpose. In defiance of ancient treaties, which put strict limits on both who might receive the fruits of Mezoa's labour and the quantity of arms which might be made available, the Norn-regents of Mezoa granted gifts of tanks and weapons to those bands of the Legiones Astartes willing to carry the war to Horus, both on the surface of Mezoa and across the sector. Many of those who had escaped the wrath of the Warmaster chose to accept these gifts and make their stand on the worlds around Mezoa, now with the tools to exact a high price in blood from the Traitors, but of all those present, it was the company of the *Ebon Drake* who received the prize of Mezoa's output.

Where they had arrived at Mezoa few in number and equipped with little beyond their boltguns and man-portable heavy weaponry, the Disciples of the Flame now found themselves replete with the finest of Mezoa's creations—chief among them several newly finished super-heavy tanks that had previously been intended for the IXth Legion and a number of command Rhino variants whose design had only been recently approved for production. These weapons of war were quickly adorned with the heraldry of the Dragon Revenant and his followers and prepared for war, in many cases proving vital to the defence of Mezoa in the battles that followed. In particular, the glaive pattern super-heavy tank designated *Dragon Eternal* was responsible for the defence of Mezoa's Septurn Gateway for four hours, after an Alpha Legion diversionary attack drew off the other defending elements. Even in death the tank did not abandon its purpose, the crew manoeuvring the vehicle so that its hulk blocked all access to the gate following its final explosive end.





Damocles Command Rhino, 'Guiding Light': This vehicle was taken by Xiaphas Jurr to act as his personal transport and command vehicle during the Battle for Mezoa. Adorned in the traditional colour scheme of the Salamanders' Igniax order and bearing the results of the divinatory arts that obsessed the Proximan recruit, it was a common sight at the forefront of Loyalist counter-strikes on Mezoa.



Glaive super-heavy tank, 'Dragon Eternal': Among the heaviest of the defensive assets deployed by the defenders of Mezoa, fighting as they did on a world whose fragile crust could not bear the weight of war Titans, the *Dragon Eternal* was the lynchpin of many Loyalist actions during the fighting. Accounting for forty-eight vehicle kills and an uncounted toll of the Traitor infantry before its destruction, the vehicle's hulk was later reclaimed by the Mezoan priesthood, who pledged to rebuild and restore it, that it might fight eternally in Mezoa's defence. Over the course of the Horus Heresy, the tank was to be rebuilt eight times, and in these latter days it stands as a monument of the wars in the primary forge of Mezoa.

Alpha Legion Decapitation Squadrons

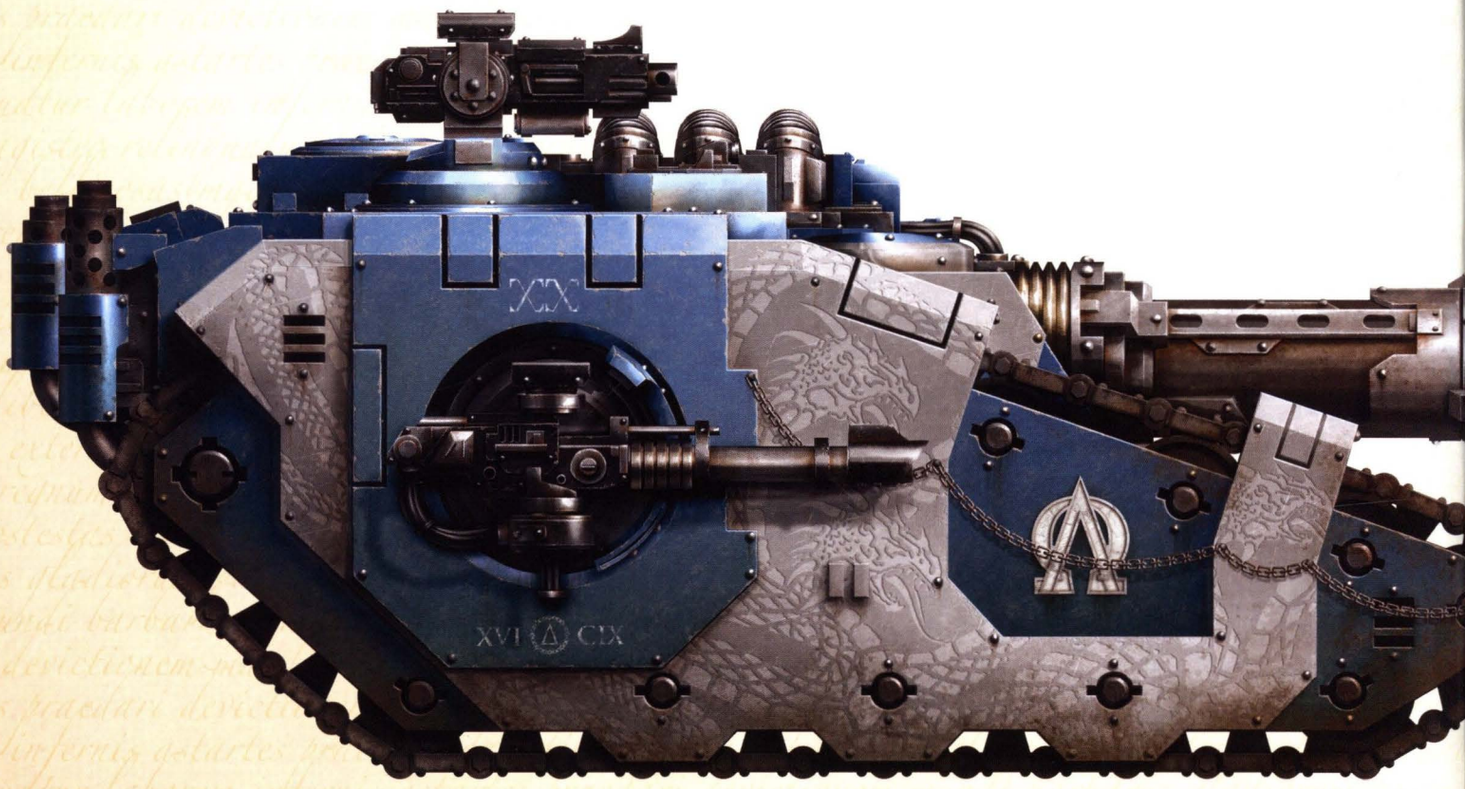
The vast host assembled by Autilon Skorr for the assault on Mezoa consisted in the main of expendable militia forces and the massed heavy infantry of the Iron Warriors 114th Grand Battalion. The unique nature of the planet of Mezoa limited the deployment of heavy assets, and made the use of Titans impossible; leaving Skorr with few methods of eliminating the heavy fortifications and super-heavy tanks and automata the defenders had assembled. The use of orbital bombardment had to be limited, lest it fully collapse the crust of the volatile world and deny him a viable landing zone, or worse, destroy the factory and storage vaults of the forge-fanes themselves, and air support was limited by the heavy ash storms that commonly swept through the upper atmosphere of Mezoa.

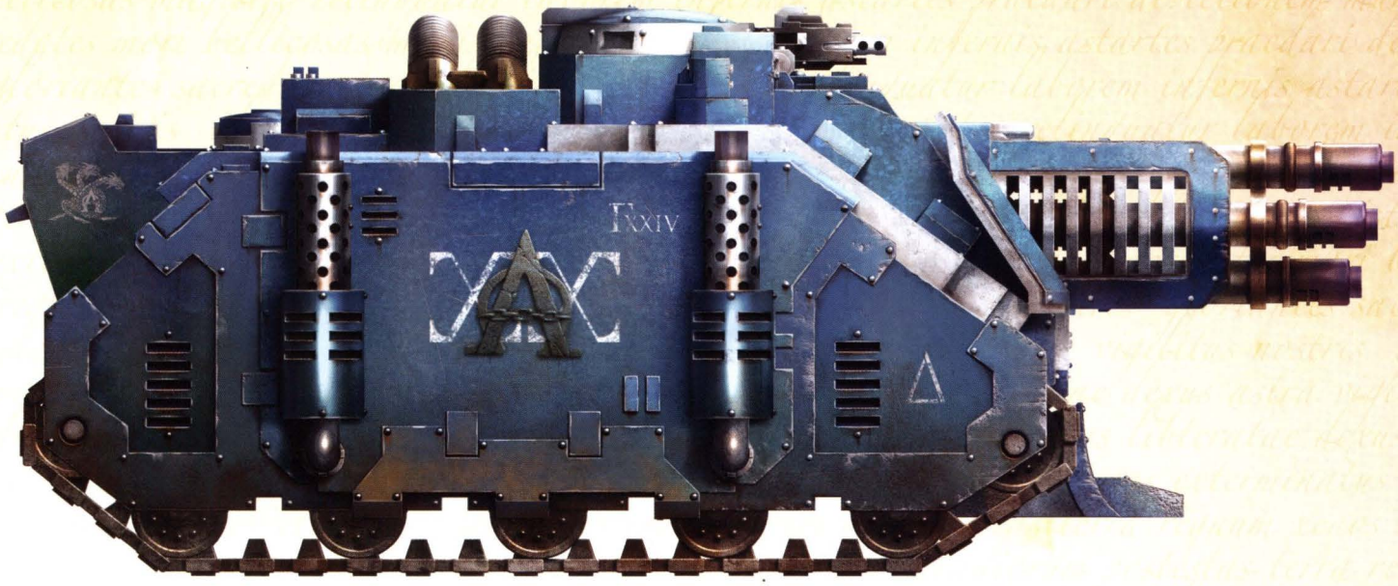
To counteract this potential deficiency in his forces, Skorr stripped the various heavy anti-armour vehicles and weapons from the separate Alpha Legion companies under his command and assembled them into specialised 'decapitation' squadrons, mostly composed of Sicaran Venator tank destroyers, Vindicators and massed Rapier batteries. These squadrons were held as reserves, to be deployed where diversionary strikes by other, more expendable, formations had drawn out one of the defenders' key assets and eliminate them before withdrawing once again. By means of this strategy, a number of precious Loyalist super-heavy tanks and Knights of the Hermetika met their ends for the use of a scant handful of Alpha Legion assets, although the losses among supporting elements of the Traitor auxiliary and Iron Warriors were far more grievous.

Battlegroup 'Dragonslayer'

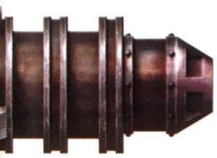
Of particular note is the Decapitation squadron assembled for the destruction of the Salamanders super-heavy tank *Dragon Eternal*, designated as a primary objective for the Alpha Legion commanders due to both its potent firepower as well as its importance to the morale of the defenders. Battlegroup 'Dragonslayer' was composed of four Sicaran Venators, three Vindicators bearing laser destroyer arrays, twelve Rapier self-propelled gun platforms and three squadrons of Alpha Legion outriders acting as spotters and defensive skirmishers. Three full companies of the Iron Warriors 114th Grand Battalion and the Ekficax Taghmata of M'Pandex were thrown against the defenders to draw out the target, nearly 600 lives expended in a futile attack to spare the Alpha Legion excessive losses.

The *Dragon Eternal* made a quick appearance, anchoring the Loyalist defensive line, but Alpha Legion commanders held their ground until the attacking units were forced to withdraw, drawing the super-heavy tank out of its optimal defensive position. There they struck in full force, a barrage of heavy weapons fire from an ambush sufficient to mortally wound even a mighty Glaive pattern tank, yet its defiant crew were still able to withdraw. The Alpha Legion commanders then issued orders for a second wave assault to cover their advance, delivering a second volley at the wounded behemoth that left it as a burning hulk.





Vindicator Assault Tank: Eschewing the more indiscriminate firepower of the demolisher cannon, most of the Vindicators employed by the Alpha Legion carry laser destroyer arrays, a weapon capable of the pinpoint destruction of enemy armour. The crews of these vehicles are often masters of ambush tactics, specialising in camouflage and concealment, allowing their victims little opportunity to evade their strikes until it is too late. The example shown here is in parade colours, a scheme rarely retained in the field, and was one of the vehicles attached to Battlegroup Dragonslayer.



Sicaran Venator Tank Destroyer, 'Hydra's Fangs': These temperamental vehicles were in short supply in many Legions, where the extensive and demanding maintenance routine required to keep them fully operational left them out of favour with more practically minded Legions. Among the Alpha Legion they were prized for their devastating first-strike capability and many of their crews were specially trained to keep their vehicles in peak condition. The *Hydra's Fangs* accounted for three Hermetika Knights over the campaign, all struck from ambush at near point-blank range, the shock pulse of the Venator's main weapon serving to 'stun' the electrical systems of the Knight long enough for the Sicaran Venator to deliver the *coup-de-grace*.

The Xana Incursion

"The blade of suspicion is keener yet than that of hate, for it slays friends as readily as foes. It sunders kin and rends apart those who in sane course of action would be allies as easily as those whom nature itself decrees as deadly foes. So savage a weapon it is that they who master it need fear none, save of course themselves."

The Book of the Hydra

The Edge of Empire

By the year 009.m31, the entire galaxy was riven by the horror of civil war. The fire that had been ignited at Isstvan had spread to consume worlds without number, while the blight of the Ruinstorm continued to howl, throwing all long-range communications awry, and warp travel over any great distance became dangerous and unpredictable at best, and all but impossible at its worst. Despite these difficulties, the war only grew more intense as thrust and counter-thrust between Loyalist and Traitor did little but create ever-greater swells of destruction and carnage without pressing either side on to ultimate victory. The galaxy burned.

In this far-spanning conflict however, not every world had chosen a side, or for that matter had such a decision been thrust upon them, either through expediency or violence. There were many worlds that through quirk of galactic geography or simple lack of strategic consequence had been spared direct conflict, while others had gone so far as to secede themselves entirely from the fighting, preferring independence or professed neutrality. Some worlds and domains however had simply done little to evidence loyalty or opposition to either cause, and into this last camp the powerful and isolated Forge World of Xana had fallen.

Occidentem Thule

The Forge World of Xana was a potent and storied example of its kind, an Ultima-II grade faculty rated as one of the most capable Forge Worlds of the Imperium, and unmatched in its region of the galaxy. It comprised a main planetary sphere, Xana II, with a number of inhabited moons and extensive mobile sub-faculties in the form of void and gas mining installations scattered throughout the debris belts and turbulent atmosphere of the macro-magnitude gas giant, Xana I, around which the Forge World orbited. Its position was on the very far tip of the galactic arm of the western fringe, granting it the title on the star charts of the Carta Imperialis as 'Occidentem Thule'—the last great port on the edge of the inter-galactic abyss. To the crews of the Imperial fleet whose long range patrols used Xana as their furthest outpost of reach, it bore another more evocative name, "*the Port of Bones*"— a reference of uncertain origin, but perhaps developed from the ossuary-white and grey-black livery of its ruling magos.

Long the subject of sinister rumour around its finding and inclusion into the Imperium during one of the darkest episodes of the Great Crusade's early history, Xana's masters were notoriously independent and politically long-estranged from Mars. Xana's privilege was bought largely with the vast outpourings of its forges to fuel and arm the ongoing Great Crusade, and expediency was the mother of the pact which bought the Forge World into the Imperium by negotiation with the emissaries of the Emperor, rather than the full auspices of Mars. While the forges of distant Xana issued forth provender and munitions in vast quantities, it was largely left alone.

Isolation and Evasion

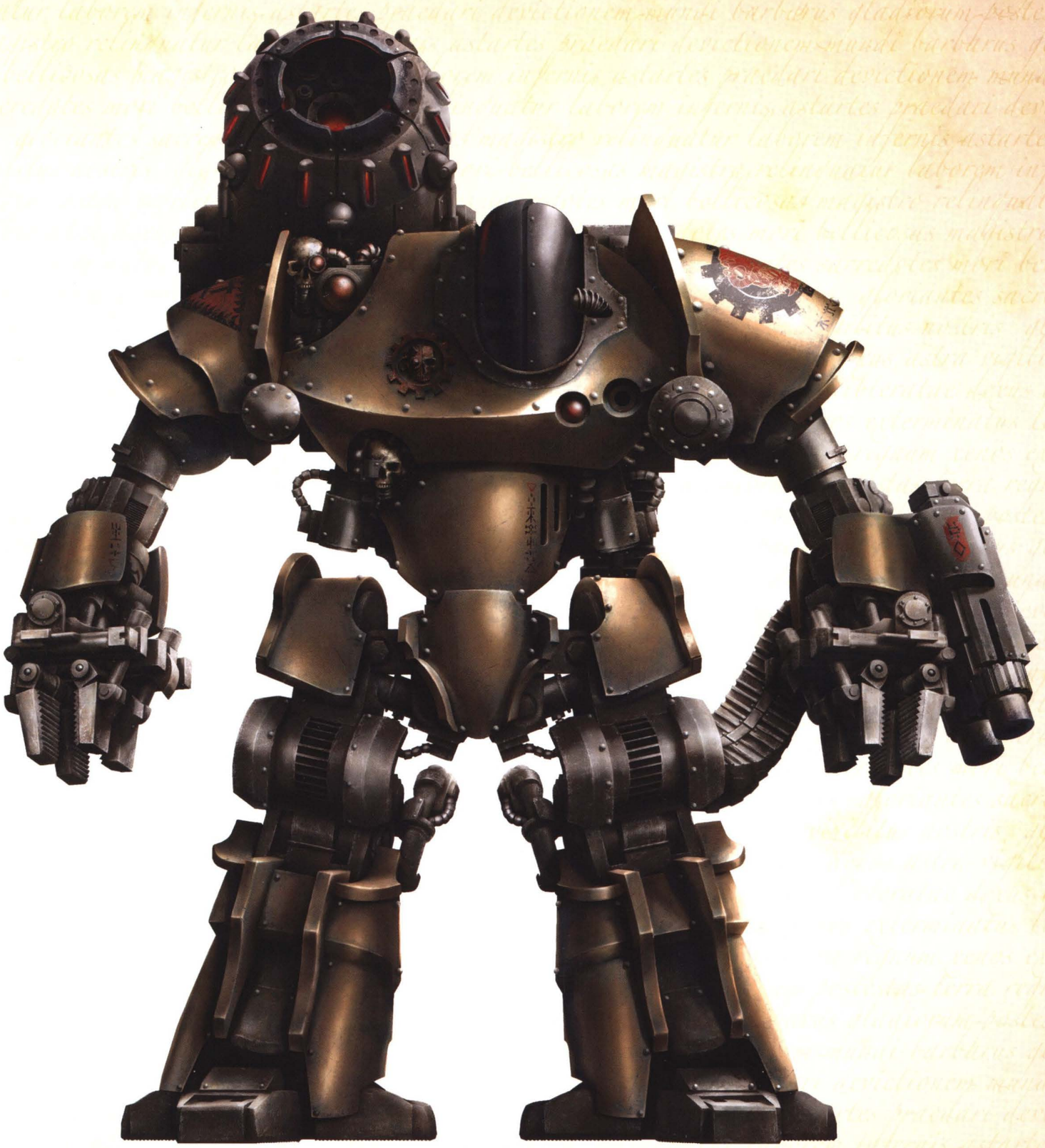
As the Horus Heresy suddenly and bloodily unfolded, Xana's isolation only increased and it was a situation its ruling synod of magos, known as the Vodian Consistory, did little to attempt to outwardly alleviate, choosing initially neither faction to favour, avowing, at least publicly, that the matter was an '*internal matter of the Great Crusade's military*' in which they had no direct involvement. Even before the coming of the Ruinstorm, scheduled freight convoys from Xana to ports both Loyalist and Traitor in allegiance had dwindled in frequency and were finally suspended altogether. This was despite Rogue Trader vessels, Chartist Voyagers and other far flung agencies reporting that the system appeared relatively accessible via the Empyrean, as far as it was from the fury of the great storm fronts of the Warp which had riven the galaxy's core. Repeated requests, impeachments, demands and even threats from Terra and the Warmaster were both met with the same chill response of stated regret and blank courtesy. Such regrets, conveyed this time through a courier warp-probe that forced its way to the Terran security fleet cordon two years after it had been launched in 006.M31, were cold comfort alongside its report of the complete loss through empyreal storm of an entire macro-ark convoy and its naval escort squadron out of Olmec almost within sight of Xana. It became later known to Loyalist sources via captured logs that similar condolences had been proffered in the following year to the Warmaster for a Traitor-oathed Rogue Trader fleet lost trying to reach Xana in distinctly similar circumstances.

Whether either side fully believed the explanations given for their lost fleets remains something of a moot point, as suspicions dawned that Xana was on no side in the conflict other than its own and was perhaps no longer content to merely sit aside from the conflict until a clear victor emerged. Evidence for this stance presented itself to the intellencers of both major factions when in late 008.M30, attackers tentatively identified as being Xana-allied Taghmata forces struck the contested mining world of Guilders Grave on the edge of the Vicidax Sector, driving off the Traitor-aligned naval blockade before going on to massacre the Loyalist militia defenders and looting the surviving planetary vaults of rare metallic elements and macro-mining engines before departing again, leaving little more than ruin in their wake.

As the war went on with no clear avenue of victory in sight, both sides now looked to the increasingly bellicose and active Forge World of Xana with renewed interest. Spies and probe ships sent to skirt the edge of the system revealed clearly that dozens of macro-transports and freighters were now partially concealed in the rocky debris belt which ringed the gas giant of Xana I, and between them and the Forge World of Xana II was a constant traffic of cargo loaders and freight lighters. The conclusion drawn from this was that in their years of isolation since the war's outbreak, the forges of Xana had not been idle and evidence began to amass that a vast and well-guarded stockpile of munitions and war machines had been built up in the system, and readied as if for shipment to a client, but to what end or to whom remained unclear.

Upon learning of this development and mindful of the fate of Guilders Grave, Rogal Dorn, Praetorian of Terra, issued a communiqué to Xana via warp-courier vessel, an open proclamation declaring the Forge World of Xana Traitoris Perdita and under sentence of death. At the same time, a more covert Loyalist offer was made via intermediaries of the Sigillite for the remission of this sentence in return for its renewed absolute allegiance and the deliverance of its stockpiles of war materiel immediately to the Loyalist build-up in the Segmentum Solar.

The Warmaster, however, was to offer a more subtle and honeyed bargain.

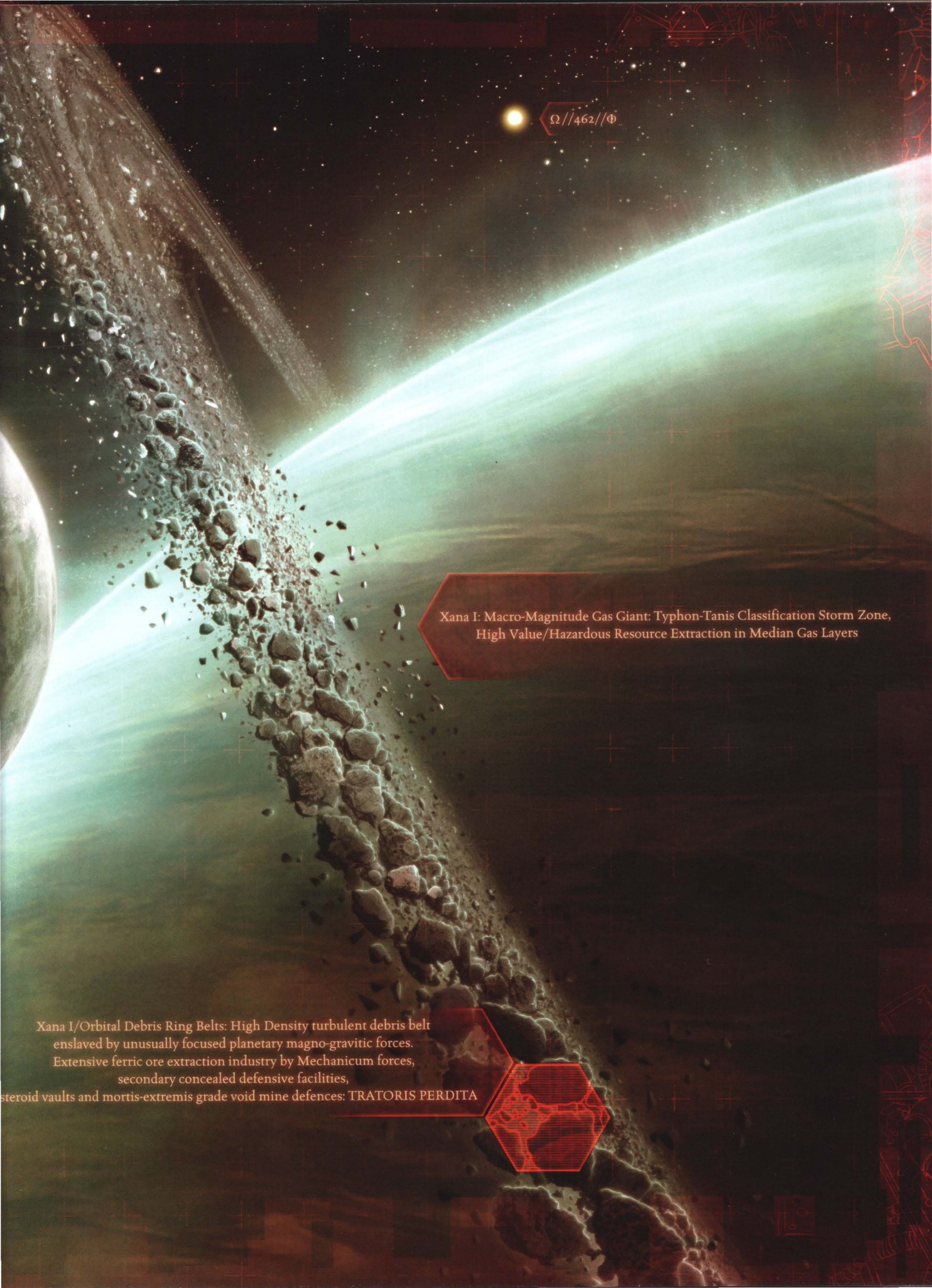


Thanatar Class Battle-automata Nurø-Ci

Taghmata Scoria, Tactical Artillery Covenant
The Rangdan Expeditionary Force

After its initial, fraught, entry into the Emperor's growing domain, the first campaign of the Great Crusade in which elements of Xana's amassed military might were to take part in was that apocalyptic clash of arms that would later pass into legend as the Rangdan Xenocides. The Battle-automata encoded Nurø-ci, the third automata of the ninth maniple in the archaic script of the Xanite enclave, is one of the few machines to survive that conflict and return to the forge-fanes of its origin. Much of the record of those battles is sealed away, but automata Nurø-ci is known to have participated in the carefully planned genocide of those xenos forces encountered by the Xanite forces at Rangda.

++Mechanicum Dominatus++
++Xana II Omnis Potentia++
++Cartographica Imperialis Designation: Primary Forge Domain, Western Galactic Fringe, Vicidax Thule Sector, Tithe Grade Ultima-II,++
++Patent Unknown// Anomalous: Ref: Age of Strife++
++WARNING TRATORIS PERDITA++
++Aleph-Noctis Level Authorization Required to Proceed++
ΧΑΠΑ
Xana-Tisiphone: Mechanicum Experimental Station and Penitentiary Colony, Satellite orbit of Xana II, location transplanted artificially from position as Xana V, Inhabitation Unknown: TRATORIS PERDITA
γ//184//Ω
Ψ//793//Θ
Xana II: Sovereign Domain of the Mechanicum, Primaris-I Grade Forge World, Apex Class Manufactora Capacity, Omega-VII Class Militaris Capacity, Assayed 2.7 Billion inhabitants: TRATORIS PERDITA
Φ//591//Ω


Ω//462//Φ
Xana I: Macro-Magnitude Gas Giant: Typhon-Tanis Classification Storm Zone,
High Value/Hazardous Resource Extraction in Median Gas Layers
Xana I/Orbital Debris Ring Belts: High Density turbulent debris belt
enslaved by unusually focused planetary magno-gravitic forces.
Extensive ferric ore extraction industry by Mechanicum forces,
secondary concealed defensive facilities,
steroid vaults and mortis-extremis grade void mine defences: TRATORIS PERDITA

The Xana Paradox

"Death has reared himself a throne, in a strange city lying alone, Hell, rising from a thousand thrones, shall do it reverence."

Unknown poetic fragments collected in the Lexis Dramaturica
Circa M2

The Beacon on the Shore of Night

'Xana', it had been a word that conjured images of sinister mystery at the edge of the unknown since the earliest days of the Great Crusade. First recorded in rumours taken from the reports of Rogue Traders and exploratory craft sent out towards the western reaches of the galaxy as early as the 800s of M30, these early 'myths' were confused, contradictory and exaggerated in the telling. These tales told of a machine empire that spanned many worlds on one hand and of a lonely outpost —a forbidden domain which held within it the wonders and terrors of the Dark Age of Technology— on the other. Some versions of the rumours held its rulers to be cyborg lords such as the masters of Mars, while others spoke of a nightmarish cabal of dark overminds, fleshless things that should have long been dead. But despite these discrepancies, certain consistencies remained between the iterations of the story; firstly that this technological power was —or at least had once been— human and that its home was a star system on the very edge of the western galactic reach upon a world that was time and again named as 'Xana'.

The pursuit of what truth lay behind the myth of Xana became of great interest to the planners and strategists of the early decades of the Great Crusade, not least of all, it is believed, to the Fabricator-general of Mars and the Emperor Himself. To the former, the mysterious data indicated the presence of a powerful and independent Forge World, though one founded perhaps by a lost Ark Mechanicum as no records remained in the vaults of Mars as to an intentional expedition to this desolate and ill-populated region of space. As to the latter's interest, it can only be speculated upon, but it is known that probe ships were sent out into the region by the Emperor's express order. Perhaps it was merely a part of the Master of Mankind's greater interest to see the far-flung domains of humanity united, or perhaps to isolate a rival to be destroyed. It might have been that he saw Xana as a potential location where one of his lost sons might be found; we shall never now know. Deep-range empyreal explorers and expedition flotillas searched far in their quest for Xana for decades, but either did not return or came back empty handed, save for a fresh handful of rumours and suppositions, and the myth of Xana remained just that, superseded by more pressing conflicts and tangible discoveries which drew away the Great Crusade's attention.

The tides of war and conquest would mean that the truth of Xana would remain uncovered until 843.M30 when a damaged galleass belonging to the Rogue Trader Casilida DeAniasie, having been flung far off-course after engaging in battle with Fra'al Corsairs, intercepted a trio of hulking automata warships at the edge of the inter-galactic void. Although they might have taken or destroyed her already damaged ship with little effort, these vessels instead offered aid and carried with them a message of greeting and an offer of diplomatic exchange between the *'Sovereign Forge Domain of Xana'* and the Imperium of Man and its Emperor. The Xana vessels made good on their intentions by taking the stricken galleass back under tow to the Xana System itself, where it was repaired and resupplied for its journey home with exemplary speed, and the Rogue Trader herself treated with courtesy and honour in a realm that DeAniasie herself would later go on to describe as a "*...beacon on the shore of night*"—a fully-fledged Forge World, as potent as any then in the Imperium save mighty Mars itself, set in orbit around a titanic gas giant, itself beholden to a star cast alone on the edge of the great void, without constellation or neighbour for hundreds of light years. A world, if any could be said to be so, on the precipice of the abyss of the unknown.

An Uneasy Alliance

Negotiations between the Imperium and Xana soon followed upon the Rogue Trader's return, but despite the cordial tone under which they had been instigated, they were quickly beset by suspicions by many within the Imperium's camp. The first among the doubters were the emissaries of Mars. To them Xana was a troubling paradox; a recognisable Mechanicum-dogmatic and Mars-originated Forge World where one should not exist, and of whose creation they had no record. Furthermore, it was no mere hardscrabble outpost of the Machine Cult, such as Kalibbrax had been when rediscovered, nor even a recognisable exemplar of an Ark-created domain which had maintained intermittent links to Mars such as Lucius. Instead, any cursory examination of Xana showed it as a primary Forge World of vast resource and manufacturing facility far outstripping its own needs. A Forge World whose roots were sunk deep, centuries deep perhaps, and indeed whose arts had dragged other minor planetary bodies into its near-orbit for its home world's use after its own native mines had played out. Its mature technologies and industries had produced multiple quasi-independent forge-fanes which in turn had created powerful Taghmata for their protection, and for the defence of their world pooled their resources to create a Titan Legion of a size matching the first rank of the Imperium's own classification, and that had also constructed its own void-navy, whose vessels had Warp capability. To the emissaries and assayers of Mars, who the Lords of Xana received with cordial if chill honour, these facts did not make sense. Far-flung Xana was simply too powerful, too well-established, too apparently concordant in Machine Cult doctrine for a world with no history of communion with Mars on record; the facts did not compute, Xana was a paradox. Or more simply, as one military attaché from the Court of Terra put it succinctly in his report, "*...Xana is a gift simply too perfect to be trusted; it is either our greatest good fortune in these times of war, or it is a serpent lying in wait to slay us. My mind perceives the former, but my soul warns the latter.*"

Suspicions were not allayed by the Xanites' vagueness as regarding their world's origins and activities over the years, blaming the tribulations of long distant wars and the privations of past solar storms of blistering power for their missing and incoherent records as to their own history, while their vast military capacity they explained as reaction to prior attacks by alien invaders. The Fabricator-general's ambassador demanded full access to planetary archives and forge-fane data-looms for verification, but was flatly denied; negotiations for admittance to the Imperium were under way and the Lords of Xana rejected any demands to capitulate sovereignty prematurely; they did not desire war, but nor would they submit to 'enslavement' without conflict.

Hard calculations were being run by this time by the commanders of the Great Crusade; estimations of the degree of force required to take Xana were high. Such a conquest would require the full might of at least one entire Space Marine Legion, preferably more, and that force backed with a full strength of multiple Titan Legions and hundreds of thousands of ancillary troops. This to secure victory over what would be an inevitably shattered prize. The force required to perform such a task was one the Imperium of 846.M30 was ill-equipped to spare, for looming over the stalemating negotiations was the spectre of a far larger war. That war would be the first waves of what would become afterwards known as the Rangdan Xenocides; the greatest existential threat of the Imperium's first century of existence and a conflict whose casualties and losses would be unmatched in scope until the wars of Horus Heresy itself were fought.

Under the baleful influence of this far greater threat, a deal was reached between the ambassadors of Terra and the Lords of Xana, a proposal which came with the undertone of drastic action by the Imperium should its generous offers be rejected. Under this treaty of Compliance, Xana would maintain its sovereignty as part of the greater Imperium, and notionally while falling under the rule of distant Mars, its affairs and secrets would largely remain its own so long as it obeyed the restrictions on technological development imposed on Mars itself by the Emperor. Xana in return, and its forges and fanes, would now arm the Great Crusade and serve as port for its ships, and the Imperium in turn would feed Xana with raw materials and fresh blood and schematics to enable this. The accord was sealed and ratified by the Lords of Xana and the Emperor's own writ, despite the misgivings of many and the barely concealed displeasure of the Fabricator-general.

In spite of the suspicions of many, the accord and the uneasy alliance bore fruit; the Titans of Xana, divided now into two Legions, the Legio Vulturum (known as the Gore Crows) and the Legio Kydianos (known as the Death Cry), left their world along with the Xanan void warship armada and scores of Cybernetica cohorts, and hurled themselves without relent into the fires of the Rangdan campaign. Their reinforcement of the front line was direly needed, and the Xanite forces broke their greater strength in countless battles on the edge of the Halo Stars, becoming shattered remnants of their former selves, but earned much honour in doing so for their Forge World. More importantly, weapons and arms poured forth from Xana and were shipped directly to the Segmentum-wide battle lines of the war, providing much needed respite and fresh strength to beleaguered Imperial forces, helping to slowly turn the tide of defeat into first stalemate and eventually victory. It was a victory Xana was in no small part bled dry to achieve.

Though now diminished, Xana entered the Great Crusade's later era as still a powerful and sovereign Forge World, its independence from the direct authority of Mars and Terra, maintained not simply by the absolute adherence to the treaty under which it had entered the Imperium, but also its great distance from the Segmentum Solar and easy scrutiny. Rumours still circulated of hidden operations and deep and forbidden secrets hidden on Xana, of heresies whispered by her Tech-Priests on the myriad battlefields on which they served, of a distance and distrust steadily growing between the Mechanicum of Xana and those of other Forge Worlds, even as the Great Crusade progressed. But compared to the oddities and macabre practises openly observed in Tech-Priesthoods the likes of the Redjak of Sarum or the Crat'mau'kora of Voss, these were subtleties lost on those outside the Omnissian Cult and its intimates.

So it was that when the Warmaster Horus rose to power after Ullanor, Xana remained a distant and almost legendary force in an Imperium grown much to encompass a galaxy on whose silent and unpopulated edge it dwelled alone, a Forge World whose magos kept no council but their own, its paradox unsolved.

Xana II

Descriptor: Captured orbital body of Xana I (a macro-magnitude gas giant), Xana-Vicidex Star System
Classification: Forge World [Grade Primaris-I-Samek, formerly Ultima-II-Aleph]
Governmental Type: Sovereign Domain of the Cult Mechanicum [Ref: Vodian Consistory]
Population Estimate: 2.7 billion Imperial Assay/978.M30
Note: Declared Traitoris Perdita – 007.M31

Xana II is a Terrestrial type world which despite its long-term inhabitation and exploitation by the Mechanicum [See addendum-record ref/chronological dating anomaly of founding], has retained a viable, albeit reduced, biosphere and sustains native and transplanted life (including chthonic megafauna), although with high degrees of environmental toxicity.

The planet's surface comprises approximately 52% high-salinity ocean, with the remaining land mass broken up into sixteen primary formations and numerous islands and archipelagos. Prevailing topography is varied, with swamp glades near the equatorial regions giving way to areas predominately of tundra and taiga towards the polar regions.

The Mechanicum's presence on the world is notably dispersed, with only some 17% of the surface dominated by artificial structures, with the vast majority of the planet's forge-fanes, production, dormitory and storage facilities located under the planet's surface in both subterranean and sub-oceanic vaults. These distinctly located geographical forges, each of which operate under considerable autonomy, are linked by a vast sub-surface network of natural caverns, played-out mineworks and deliberately created tunnels of unknown extent and complexity. As well as Xana's mass-manufacturing and technological capability, which is unmatched on the western fringe of the Imperium, it is also of note that thanks to its tenacious biosphere, which may evidence specific evolution or artificial adaption to endure industrial toxicity, an ecology which includes extensive subterranean flora, Xana, unlike most Forge Worlds, is fully self-sufficient in agricultural need.

This sustaining factor, along with the inherently protected nature of its planetary infrastructure, makes Xana II a remarkably independent and highly defensible example of a Forge World of its magnitude, although data harvested by the Carta Imperialis survey also suggests that most of the planet's resources have been exhausted and consumed, making its manufactora dependent on off-world supply to sustain full output.

The Feathered Messenger

The first ambassador sent by Horus to Xana after Dorn's judgement was an unexpected one. Assessing perhaps correctly that an overt show of empty force would avail him nothing at this time and that a Priest of Mars would be even less welcome on Xana than one of his warlords, Horus had instead sent one of the lodge priests of Davin. Identified by Loyalist agents as one 'Unvacar Noon', an individual bedecked in strange feathered raiment and the bones of the dead, he offered the Lords of Xana more than threats and intimidation; on behalf of his master, he offered power.

Much as with Sarum and Cyclothrathe, other 'renegade' Forge Worlds distrustful of Mars that the Warmaster had enticed into his cause with the lure of petty empire building and freedom of experimentation, he offered a new treaty of alliance whose accords Xana's ruling Vodian Consistory would find more to their liking than the old. By this new pact Xana would serve his '*new Imperium*' just as it had the old, but where they had been used and bled dry callously in the past by a master who cared nothing for their power or prosperity, under Horus they would flourish and be rewarded.

Gone would be the petty restrictions of the Emperor's technological edicts —blocks put in place to avert the spectre of the terrors of Old Night— and gone would be the dead hand of Machine Cult dogma—if they so desired, so long as they offered up their weapons and war machines to the Traitors' cause with abundance. The details would prove more torturous and elaborate to finalise, but in secret an agreement was reached, even while in false faith the Lords of Xana continued to equally secretly deal with Malcador's emissaries to the contrary. So the Archmagos of the Vodian Consistory sought to play one side against the other, right to the bitter end.

Flashpoint

By the closing divisions of 009.M21, the bargain between Xana and the Warmaster's proxies was in its final stages of conclusion. It was, in the ancient manner, to be sealed with an exchange of gifts. Though the transfer of billions of tonnes of arms and armour would be part of Xana's fealty to Horus, these first gifts the Vodian Consistory would present would be unique and incomparable. They would be worthy of one who meant to be master of the galaxy entire; Xana would gift Horus with the power of Ordinatus.

Ulator

The Ordinatus classification held the most powerful and arcane mobile weapons platforms in the Mechanicum's arsenal. They were city-burners and fortress breakers without compare, and whether armed with magna-beam lance, matter-cyclone or rad-conflagrator, each was mounted on huge tracked reactor units for mobility and heavily shielded from attack, allowing them to traverse and survive on the most hellish battlefield. Each was a work of deadly artifice and ancient power. Much like the Titans whose firepower they often outstripped, the Ordinatus varied in scale and potency. From the truly colossal, unique and unreplicable relics of the Dark Age of Technology, the Ordinatus Primaris, such as the Mars and Endymion whose power was legendary, even compared to the god machines of the great Legio Titanicus, to the lesser but still gargantuan and deadly Ordinatus Minoris sub-classes. The Minoris were, at the height of the Great Crusade, within the reach of only the most potent Forge Worlds to construct, and only then in the most limited numbers. Such were the gifts that Xana offered; no less than three such terrifying weapons of the Ordinatus Ulator pattern, fully battle ready and armed with devastating sonic destructor weapons. These were Titan-killers, slaughterers of armies, each powerful enough to turn the tide of a battle at a stroke, and in potency far beyond any super-heavy tank and dwarfing the firepower of even the mighty Diamatine siege-guns that had fallen into the grasp of the Iron Warriors earlier in the Horus Heresy.

These Ordinatus, named *Mithrax*, *Nepothax* and *Ashurax* after Ancient Terran deities long dead of worship, were first to be demonstrated before the Warmaster's chosen emissary at the Forge World's own proving grounds on the moon of Xana-Tisiphone, then afterwards, their ceremonial handover would act as a symbolic sealing of Xana's loyalty to Horus. That this trio of mighty weapons would be given over to Horus himself to dispose of as he saw fit was both a potent asset to gift the Warmaster with, and also it might be seen as a coded barb thrust in the side of the Traitor Mechanicum Fabricator-general Kelbor Hal, who though he sat high in Horus' cause, had never himself made such a direct gift, keeping those few Ordinatus he and his satraps had at their disposal firmly under Mechanicum control. By this act Xana's lords sought perhaps to set the groundwork to become Mars' rivals in the Traitors' cause, not simply a subordinate Mechanicum force.

The Emissary of the Uncrowned King

The hand of the Warmaster in the final matter of the alliance with Xana was to be no priest of Davin alone, but one of his own warlords, one of his own blood; Raxhal Koraddon—a chieftain of the Reavers raised to captaincy for his bloody endeavours during the scouring of the Sons of Horus Legion of its Loyalists on the ash-strewn ruins of Isstvan III.

Koraddon had in the years of war that followed Isstvan III gained a fierce reputation, first during the Dropsite Massacre and later in leading a score of Dark Compliance actions for his Primarch across the northern reaches of the Segmentum Obscurus. Koraddon's ruthless and prideful reputation preceded him, as did knowledge that he was looked upon with favour by Horus, making him an honoured, if threatening choice to serve as the Warmaster's emissary in the matter. The vessel which bore him to the Xana System was no less a display of power; the Geryon class Grand Cruiser *Cicatrice Tyrannis*, taken as a prize by the Traitors during the Battle of Port Maw earlier in the war, her once white and golden hull now scorched black and pitted by the fires of untold void battles since her fall from grace. With the *Cicatrice* came an escorting squadron of eight frigates of various types and four Isos class fleet tenders. These latter vessels were small, armed, warp-capable transport ships designed to ferry vital supplies to warships in frontline service, but who bore now a far stranger and more macabre cargo; the Warmaster's gift to the Lords of Xana. Carried within these ships were hundreds of locked and armoured cargo pods, within which travelled the wreckage of Isstvan, of Momed and of Autosarat, and unknown other battlefields where the Sons of Horus had met their brother Legiones Astartes in blood and triumphed. The legacy of the dead was to be the Warmaster's gift to Xana.

Sealed in these containers were the fallen of those Legions the Sons of Horus had fought, and along with them a ruin of broken tanks and sundered war machines, shattered arms and rent armour—the charnel remains of a dozen Loyalist Legions. This was a carrion feast of technology and gene-craft priceless to the Lords of Xana; to them it was no mere detritus of battle, but a treasure store of lore and techno-arcana for those with the skill to decipher its secrets and who cared nothing for the writ of Mars, nor what the Emperor had forbidden them to study.

Unwelcome Guests

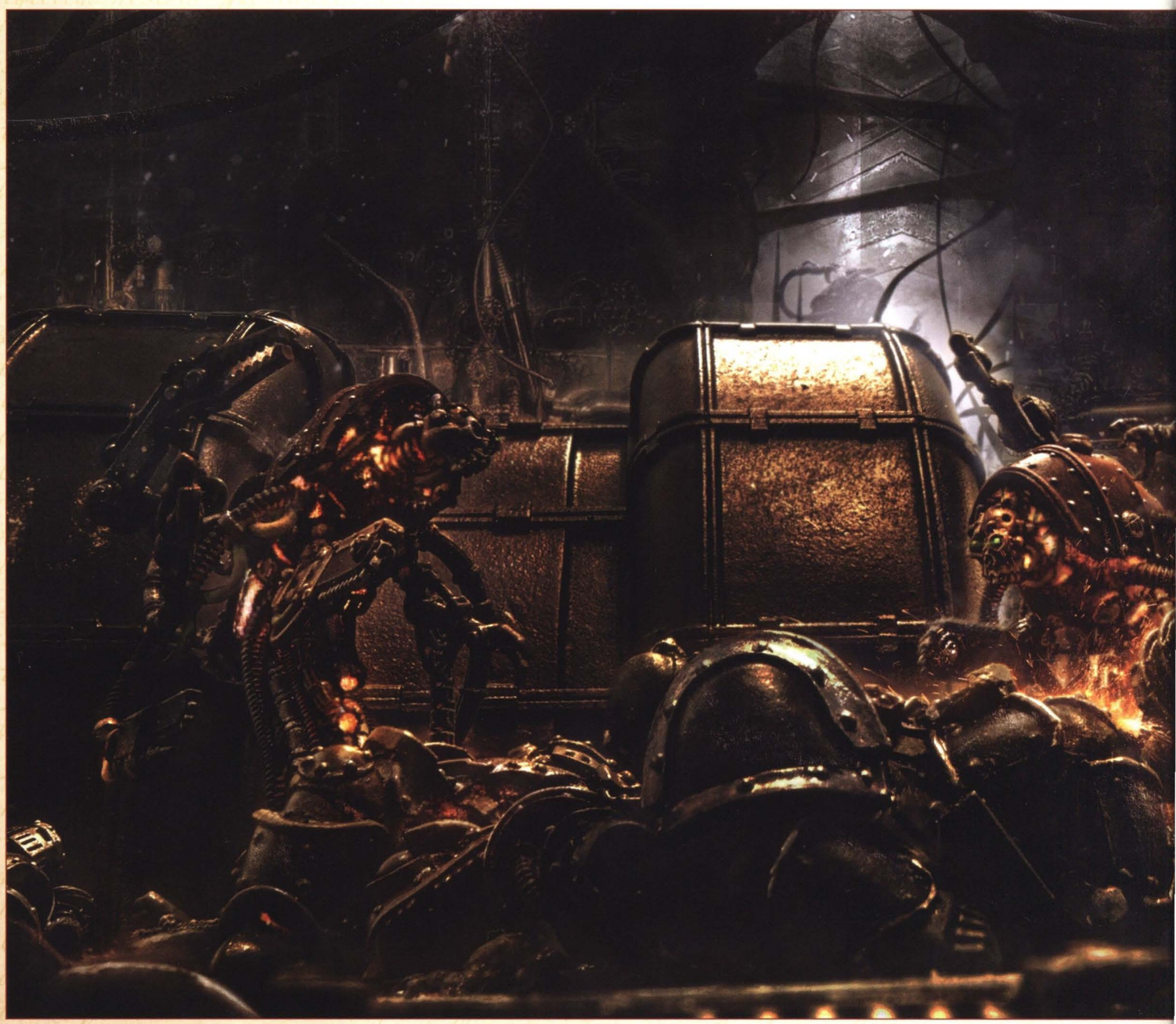
Even as the *Cicatrice Tyrannis* and her escorts entered close orbit of the immense gas giant Xana I on final approach to the Forge World itself, the auspex grid of the outer planetary system came alive with emergency signals and alarms. Perilously close to the gravity-shadow of the system's inner sphere, realspace ripped open and the brute and barbed shapes of scores of warships forced their way out of the Warp. The tracking augers and void-cogitators of Xana's sleepless defensive engine-minds swept the intruders and quickly analysed the fleet, and came to the absolute conclusions of hostility and swung into baleful wakefulness. No fewer than five capital class vessels were identified, Imperial in origin and Loyalist in allegiance, with no effort made to hide who or what they were. At their head was a vessel immediately identified as the *Amphion*, one of the mighty Gloriana class battleships and an example of the type which often provided the flagships of the Legiones Astartes themselves, outfitted as a pure device of void-born firepower, and one of the lynchpins of the Solar fleet itself. With these capital ships came a slew of smaller escort craft and a dozen transport craft whose anomalously over-powered emissions marked them as one thing only to the cold intellect of the machine-spirits; fire ships, loaded with warheads and volatiles designed to inflict catastrophic damage in suicide attacks against their targets. Machine-spirits conferred with magos, and with blinding speed beyond human comprehension was data analysed, checked and re-analysed, conclusions drawn and tested, re-submitted and issued as directive. This then was Dorn's judgement come at last, or at least part of it, the make-up and composition of the powerful fleet indicated a raid-in-force, not an invasion, with its target the waiting fleet of loaded macro-conveyers, protected within Xana I's debris rings.

Terra had decided that if they were not to have the bounty of Xana's forges for themselves, then none would, and calculated that the risk of deploying several potent heavy units from Terra's own defence armada was worth the reward this mission of destruction entailed.

With faultless precession, the defenders of Xana rose to meet their aggressors; squadrons of frigate-sized machine sapient hunter-killers and scores of autonomous weapons platforms rose from within the vaporous depths of Xana I's atmosphere to protect their master's wealth and spat their payloads with synchronised fury, sending hundreds of void torpedoes hurling towards their target, the plasma drives of the shark-like hunter-killers blazing in their wake. From their own stations on allotted patrol routes across the planetary system, Xana's own interstellar warships, battle-arks and attack carriers in the main, far larger than the local defensive vessels, awoke and burned at maximum thrust to intercept the Loyalist assault force, which despite the bravery and skill of its Navigators who had dropped the force into realspace close enough to be hours rather than days distant from their intended target, still able to contest the attack before it reached its goal, or at the least close a lethal trap behind the intruders. Calculations were checked and tactical projections run and re-run thousands of times in bare seconds, secondary waves of munitions roared forth from the surface of the Forge World of Xana II itself and its own sentinel void-battle servitors —mechanical Kraken the size of strike cruisers— broke from their steel shells like hollow moons and powered towards the fray. As the white blood cells of a human body swarm and overwhelm an invading virus, so would the war machines of Xana swarm and overwhelm this unexpected attack, no matter its power.

The False War

The news of the attack on the Xana System had inevitably reached the Sons of Horus, whose own vessel had detected the incursion from the Warp of the Imperial forces and bore witness to the apocalyptic response from Xana's defences. Koraddon demanded answers. He was met with profuse apologies for any alarm caused, and assured that the matter would be dealt with promptly and without risk to the Warmaster's delegation,



and that there would be no need to alter the planned exchange of gifts and demonstration of the Ordinatus. For Xana, both the demonstration and the impending void battle had become a necessary display of strength before their future allies in ways they had never planned, but no less vital because of this. The Vodian Consistory would not lose face before Horus.

So it was that even as the Loyalist and Mechanicum warships and torpedoes hurtled at unimaginable speeds towards each other in the void far beyond, the matter of Xana's formal alliance with the Traitor cause proceeded with much ceremony and clockwork precision. By prior arrangement the Warmaster's cargo was delivered from orbit, even as Xana II's planetary interceptor batteries fired, cycled and fired again, sending torpedoes speeding into the night on columns of fire. The gift-cargo was landed between the barrage launches, still sealed in consignment to the landing ports of several of Xana's major forge-fanes: Tephra, Escorial and Setna, no doubt to prevent discord in the Consistory itself by dividing the spoils between the archmagos, to be released by code key transfer as the accord was formally made.

Meanwhile, the Sons of Horus warship, *Cicatrice Tyrannis*, was permitted into close orbit of the moon of Xana-Tisiphone, sheltered from the waves of fire unleashed from the Forge World itself, and Koraddon, with Unvacar Noon at his side, descended with a full company-sized honour guard of Sons of Horus to the surface via wings of fully armed Stormbirds and assault landers; a display of force and perhaps of displeasure that could not be lost on the waiting Mechanicum delegation. Ready to meet Koraddon's party on the edge of the great proving grounds, a vast artificial battlefield outside the half-kilometre high walls of the great prison-forge of Tisiphone-Shaol, was Archmagos-Procurator Gilim Raijan, the prime arbiter of Xana's ruling Vodian Consistory and his personal covenant of magos, guardian-servitors and lexmechanics.

Such records that remain of this meeting are fragmentary and uncorroborated, and suggest a cold and tension-laden encounter between the barely contained arrogance of the Sons of Horus warlord and the chill, precise civility of the Archmagos of Xana, with the strange and macabre figure of the Davinite priest acting as intermediary. Of the impending void battle nothing was mentioned, and after the initial diplomacy and greetings were concluded, the nature of the planned demonstration was detailed.

What was presented to the Warmaster's emissaries was to be a false war of sorts, but one in which the carnage would be very real. Thousands of armed slaves and human chattel, some were abhumans, others forge serfs and adsecularis, while others were military prisoners taken in raids by the Xanites —soldiers from the Loyalist cause for the main— were unleashed onto the kilometres-wide proving grounds. Controlled by remote-denoted suicide-collars and spurred on by auto-injected chemicals where needed, this damned regiment was equipped with a panoply of weapons ranging from small arms up to and including even heavy tanks of Imperial pattern, and they had been given a simple but impossible task—to survive what was coming.

From within the armoured observation cupola of a hulking Mechanicum land crawler, flanked by a pair of Sons of Horus Mastodon carriers forming escort, would the Warmaster's emissaries and the Archmagos Raijan observe the bloody game that was to follow, inviolate behind their void shields but within the thick of the contrived battle. It was to be a thing of sheer destructive spectacle—a massacre made to order. The vast black vaulted gates of the prison-forge opened and the three monsters emerged into view, *Mithrax*, *Nepothax* and *Ashurax*, each Ordinatus fully armed and operational, and each with a coterie of Sons of Horus Techmarines on board to observe their operation first hand.

With a coded signal which promised instant death if compliance was not given, the first wave of enslaved soldiers attacked, hundreds and then thousands of infantrymen pouring across the broken, shell-pitted ground. In response, the Ordinatus spread out and deployed, advancing, forming an echelon, half-seen clusters of humming automata hovering to guard each huge war engine's flanks should anything close to endanger their mighty charges.

Like a vast ground-swarm of insects, the infantry wave surged and began to encircle the rumbling metal beasts, the Ulators' vast and baroque cannon beginning to crackle and glow with building energies of savage force, building until flares of sudden lightning arcs and shimmering surges of distorted air spat from their barrels and coils like angry ghosts. The first of the desperate attackers' weapons fire —heavy stubber rounds and unguided rockets— had only just began to patter harmlessly from the Ordinatus' all-encompassing protective power fields when at last the Ulators' sonic destructors spoke. There was a brief, blinding flash. A roaring, all-consuming silence that devoured all sound, the surface of the world itself seemed to ripple like a tortured sea and in that instant a thousand lives were snuffed out. Bodies, torn to red rags by the all-destroying waves of sonic energy, were blasted across the battlefield as if driven by a hurricane, and beneath them three great trenches now gouged the earth to mark the unleashed blasts. Beside these furrows scores of bloodied men staggered on broken limbs, their senses devoured and minds shattered. Those fortunate to be far enough away saw the fate of their comrades and fled if they were able, or simply collapsed in shock.

The Ordinatus, implacable, rolled on, the observer column behind them in their wake, towards the ultimate goal of a shattered cityscape some nine kilometres distant; a city that had been built and rebuilt many times in the past, only to be destroyed in the testing of Xana's guns. The signal went out and the second wave was ordered in, this time a mixed force of armoured infantry and supporting armour. The attack was even more desperate, the storm that erupted across the Ordinatus' shields more violent, but the outcome was the same: an army wiped out as by the hand of an annihilating god. The signal was issued again and again and the bloody charade of war continued, now armoured forces alone, now jump troops, now battle-servitors, now a column of super-heavy tanks to test the mighty Ulators' defences to the limit. The killing went on for hours.

Historia Terra Regnum

Fragments and Suppositions

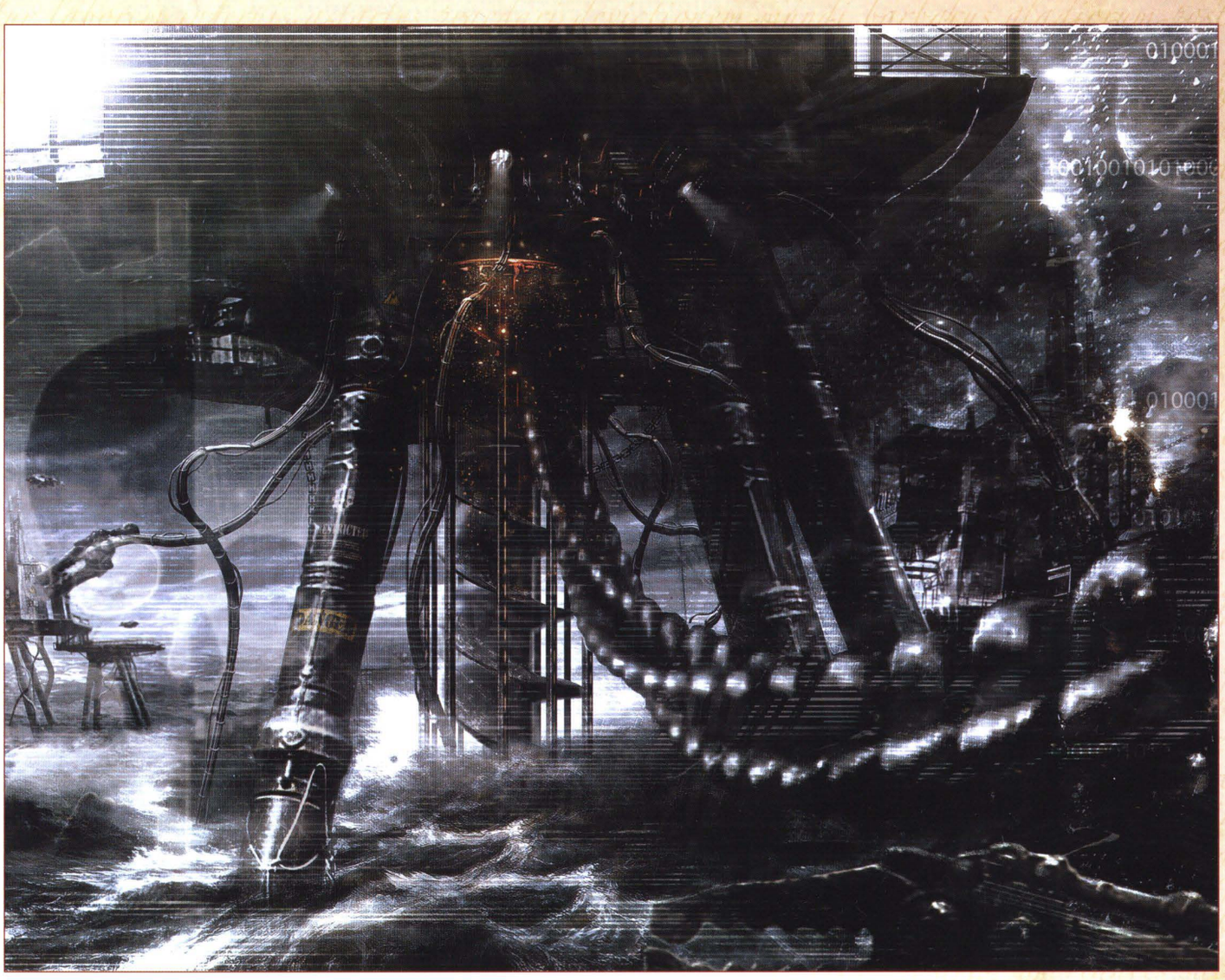
Much of what is known to the record about the incident known as the Xana Incursion is a dossier assembled from diverse and incomplete secondary sources. These include the akashic archives of the *Amphion* recovered from her hulk after the Battle of Triton, the harvested data-looms of the Xanan exile-savant Mordifia Turul and the apocryphal appendix to the *Tears of the Gorgon*, an allegorical and now prohibited treatise associated with the {redacted} Chapter of the 3rd Founding. The primary source file of the operation, held within the Seal and Office of the Sigillite and the Divisio Sicarii, were lost during the devastation of the Siege of Terra. It is also certain that during the duration of the Wars of the Heresy, the operation was itself kept secret by the orders of the Sigillite even from Imperial High Command. As such, while there is good evidence to suggest that the real Traitor embassy had been somehow compromised, intercepted and replaced by covert Imperial forces cannot be contested, it is also highly likely that the individual masquerading as Raxhal Koraddon was in fact Endryd Haar, an outcast not of the Sons of Horus but the World Eaters Legion, who remained loyal, but the provenance of at least 1,000 Legiones Astartes accompanying him remains a matter for some conjecture.

It is the general consensus that this force, undertaking what was in effect a suicide mission with little hope of recovery or rescue even if success was achieved, was made up of veteran Legiones Astartes who, like Endryd Haar, had remained loyal, even though their parent Legions had turned Traitor. This desperate and damned force had little to lose, it can be argued, and nothing to gain save redemption in death. Just how Endryd Haar survived, as survive he did as his actions during the later Solar War are a matter of record, also remains unknown. Of equal enigma is the depth of the Dark Angels' involvement, but perhaps the most unknowable and disquieting mystery regards the Xana Incursion is the horror which erupted on Xana II after the Archmagos and the attack of the *Dark Sovereign*.

The Shadow of the Angel's Wing

While the power of the three gifts was being so emptily and murderous demonstrated on Xana-Tisiphone, in the void the opposing fleets met. Unimaginable forces of destruction were unleashed as beam lances wove traceries of annihilating light across the void, waves of torpedoes slammed into thunderous barrages of counter-fire and atomic explosions rippled like dying stars across the firmament. The Imperium's battleships formed a conical wedge to protect their lethal entourage of fire ships from attack, their escorting frigates and destroyers darting madly around them to intercept any torpedo salvoes or servitor-fighters that broke through the titanic barrages of the *Amphion* and her sisters, some paying with their lives to carry out their bloody task, interposing their own frail hulls against the fury. Slowly, Xana's fist of iron closed around the Loyalist fleet, and though scores of Mechanicum hunter-killers perished, torn to spiralling fragments by the macro-cannon and plasma cannonades of the Loyalists, and entire war-arks were sliced in half from stem to stern by the *Amphion's* prodigious giga-scale primary lances, the attacking fleet began to falter and shrink. First one of the Loyalist battleships, the *Dequenne's Fury*, fell out of formation, a burning hulk, then soon after a second, the venerable *Sceptre of Io*, spiralled out of control, the beasts of steel gnawing and coiling across her hull like ravenous ghouls, Thallax Covenants and Castellax battle-automata injected like poison into the battleship's veins as the Solar Auxilia armsmen aboard fought desperately for survival to little avail. The Loyalists' defensive shield forced open, its escort screen stripped away, the fire ships themselves began to flare brightly in their death throes. Slowly, and at great cost, the Xanite Mechanicum were winning the battle, the Loyalist fleet would never reach striking distance of the bounty ships hidden in the debris belt.

The weapons platforms in the murky stratosphere of Xana II had fallen silent at last, their munitions spent, as had the ground silos on Xana II discharged in full. In the void distant, the matter was now being decided by the brutality of a close-range void battle in which they would play no part. So it was that the Mortis-XI defensive station at the heart of the debris belt's defence network began to cycle down its systems to a defensive posture, the Tech-Priest chorus cyber-bonded to its control gyre reaching out with their djinn-sight to the dozens of weapons platforms they controlled, reporting status and correcting positional anomalies



in their deployment caused by their now reduced mass. Suddenly, their auguries screamed with a new hostile contact, a warship impossibly close, not beyond in the void of space, but beneath them in the thick atmosphere of Xana I. The Mortis-XI station died in an eruption of nothingness, vortex torpedoes ripping it out of reality in a squall of disintegrating wreckage. In its place a sable-black ship sliced out of the mirk, long and wicked as a blade, the near-seamless armour of its surface featureless save for a single crimson icon across its low prow, graven in the image of a winged sword.

The sable ship turned almost lazily in an arc towards the dozens of lumbering transports and freighters whose protection within the debris belt of Xana I was worthless now against this wolf among the flock, and she began to kill. Secondary plasma batteries and defensive lasers spat from the spent weapons platforms towards the murderous vessel but they were too little to even give her pause. On Xana II the cold minds which ruled the forge-fanes quickly identified the vessel, for she was a unique killing engine alongside which their own forces had fought many decades before during the Rangdan wars. She was no mere Legiones Astartes strike cruiser, but a lone relic of Old Night, a thing recovered from the permafrosts of Ganymede by the Emperor's own hand. Her name was the *Dark Sovereign*, and she belonged to the I[st] Legion, to the Dark Angels.

The Wrath of the Betrayed

On Xana-Tisiphone, news of the blade in the dark was shock enough to call a sudden halt even to the contrived carnage of the Ordinatus' demonstration. The macro-munitions explosions of the dying transports in the debris field of the Xana I gas giant were potent enough to be clearly visible in the skies overhead. The Warmaster's prizes were dying in flames, and Xana's void ships were simply too far away to prevent it.

On the observation deck of the hulking Mechanicum crawler, Archmagos-Procurator Gilim Raijan turned to Unvacar Noon, perhaps to offer explanation or perhaps to entreat the Sons of Horus' own warship to attack the Dark Angels vessel, only to find Noon's features melting like wax before him. The emissary's arm flashed out, too fast even for the augmented reflexes of the Archmagos to react against, and a gilded barb sunk into his body, a roaring electroshock surge shorting out his power systems and collapsing his personal defensive shield. Raijan fell back away from his attacker as his own guardian-servitors fell on the blurring, shifting, shadow-quick assassin, but behind himself, he found the armoured bulk of Koraddon looming over him as he staggered. The verdigris-armoured warlord reached down to the fallen Archmagos and wordlessly tore off Gilim Raijan's head with his power fist in a shower of sparks and black fluids, and then pulverised his twitching metal body into scrap.

The Hour of Execution

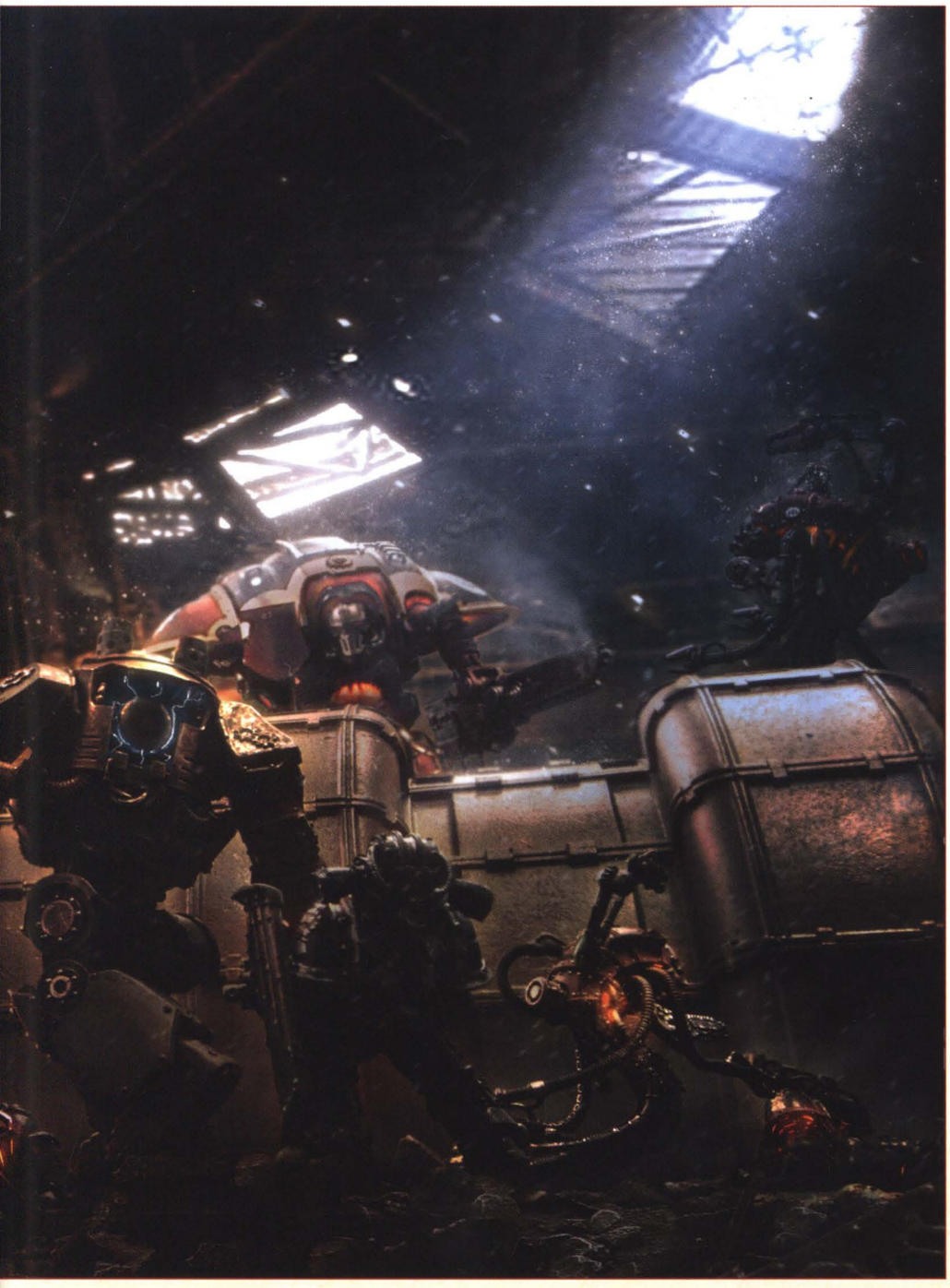
The Lords of Xana had been deceived and by that deception the Loyalists' bloody stratagem had borne fruit. Some three hours after the initial exchange of fire of the engagement against the Loyalist raiding fleet led by the *Amphion*, the full forces of the Mechanicum's void defences had been drawn out and committed to the battle, Xana II's long range munitions had been expended and their warships were now locked in close-quarters fighting with the Terran battlegroup. The Xanite vessels were now simply too far away to defend their home Forge World, or more importantly, protect the huge supply fleet that lay at anchor in the Xana I debris belt, when a new Loyalist attacker, the deadly *Dark Sovereign*, launched her own devastating surprise assault from within the gas giant Xana I's atmosphere.

Amid this general chaos, the sudden battle on Xana-Tisiphone went all but unnoticed as another lie was revealed, and those who had masqueraded as the Sons of Horus and the emissaries of the Warmaster revealed themselves to be cut from entirely different cloth. Legiones Astartes they were for the main, but they were not Malcador's chosen —later to be called Knights-Errant— these were the bitter fall-out of Legions who had turned traitor while they had remained resulted loyal, a decision many had already paid for in blood and sinew in battle against those who they had once called brother. Their leader was Endryd Haar, a World Eater once, and it was he who had passed for the Sons of Horus warlord Koraddon, who it is likely that he himself had earlier slain. He and those with him had by brutal surprise attack taken over command of all three of the Ordinatus Minoris intended as gifts for the Warmaster, and now with malign savagery, turned their dread power on their creators.

First, the escorting guardian-automata had been shot down and crushed by the Sons of Horus-liveried Mastodon heavy tanks that had served as Koraddon's honour guard, before the baleful power of the sonic destructors of the Ordinatus had

swept nearby Xanite armour and support vehicles to oblivion. The anarchy was further accelerated when the Loyalist Techmarines compromised the local djinn command skein by interfacing with the shattered remains of the Archmagos Gilim Raijan to operate the remote release on the collars of the thousands of remaining war slaves who were to be used in the bloody demonstration of the Ordinatus' power. These armed slaves, once free, fled where they could, spreading further the disorder and wild violence that had been unleashed.

The desperate bid to seize the highly prized Ordinatus was only the beginning of the operation on Xana-Tisiphone. The huge warship which had brought the supposedly Traitor delegation to Xana, the *Cicatrice Tyrannis*, dropped lower into Xana-Tisiphone's orbit, placing the shadow of the moon between her and Xana II, shielding herself from any retribution that was to follow as her crew ignored all requests to attack the *Dark Sovereign* or otherwise aid the defence against the Loyalists. The *Cicatrice Tyrannis* then commenced her own company-scale ground assault on Xana-Tisiphone, Stormbirds and Thunderhawk gunships descending as the power of the Ordinatus was turned upon the cyclopean gates of the great prison-forge of Tisiphone-Shaol, sundering them.



The Fury of the Dark Sovereign

In the debris ring that orbited Xana I, a great and violent tempest was being enacted. One after another, the huge freight ships of the supply fleet, heavily laden with munitions and other volatiles, were torn apart by the fury of the Dark Angels warship's attacks or were set burning and left bleeding their disintegrating cargos into space. The macro-transports, some tens of kilometres long —never intended for war— had no arms or defences of their own enough to answer such a deadly craft as the *Dark Sovereign*, while their ungainly bulk would have made escape impossible even if they had not been caught at station by the blade-like predator ship. As the *Dark Sovereign* reaved her way through the great arc of supply vessels, cannon blazing as she went, she reached the core of the fleet, where the most valuable prize vessels were kept—brazen-hulled Mechanicum barques and stasis-vaulted dromons, now drawn up into a defensive toroid formation. Compared to the dull hulks of the macro freighters, these transports had teeth enough to answer their attacker, and as the *Dark Sovereign* plunged down amid them like a knife from the dark, the barque's co-ordinated batteries opened fire on their attacker, lancing the void with blazing streams of superheated plasma and golden beams of coherent energy.

The *Dark Sovereign's* shields flared as the barrage found her, silhouetting the blade-like ship in a corona of light but she came on undaunted, for this was a vessel of the Ist Legion and a veteran of centuries of nightmarish war amid the dark stars. Instead of the close pass to bring her weapons to bear with maximum effect, which naval doctrine dictated and the Mechanicum's logis-cogitators had no doubt also predicted, the *Dark Sovereign* dived into the heart of the defensive formation, her guns suddenly silent, all available power directed to her shields to weather the storm of counter-fire at point-blank range. She passed her first prey at a scant few hundreds of metres and a talon of Kharybdis assault claws stabbed out from the *Dark Sovereign's* flanks to bury themselves in the Xanite barque's hull. The Dark Angels warship rolled as she sped by and more assault claws speared into a second barque, too close and too swift to be intercepted. A squadron of Caestus assault rams broke from the *Dark Sovereign* and peeled off in the wake of the warship's blazing engines to find prey of their own as the Dark Angels ship found her final target, a long, almost crystalline void dromond, designated now the Mu-571, a singular ship which was perhaps once of

xenos origin before the Mechanicum had spidered their own steel-grey workings across its white-quartz hull. The Mu-571's own drives burned white hot as it tried to escape imminent collision, but did so in vain, the armoured belly of the *Dark Sovereign* smashed the Dromond's spine and flew on, shredding the Mu-571's void shields to nothingness and setting the ship tumbling out of control, as in its heart-chambers reality split open and the black-armoured figures of Dark Angels Terminators manifested in the lightning-crackle aftershock of their teleporter transit.

The Logic of Survival

Deep within the protected forge-fanes of Xana II, city-sized conglomerations of manufactora, vaults and hive-warrens sunk far beneath the planet's surface, the remaining magos of the Vodian Consistory communed with each other in near-frenzied pulses of data, spanning the world's sub-surface networks. With preternatural speed it can be assumed that they gathered all available information about the catastrophe that was unfolding around them; betrayal, assault, mass destruction, a war on multiple fronts in which they had been comprehensively blindsided and led into trap after trap. How they with their vast machine-augmented intelligences had been so outwitted was an impossibility to ponder later, but for now action was required if survival, the primary directive of any Forge World, was to be guaranteed.

In the face of such a shocking turn of events, paranoia now came to dominate their reasoning. Now, faced with the undisprovable possibility that even more attacking forces were on their way to besiege their Forge World, the Vodian Consistory despatched override signals of recall to their remaining war craft engaged in void battle to defend Xana II and rid it of the 'Sons of Horus' grand cruiser which lurked in orbit of its moon like a waiting assassin. Withdrawal of the fleet from pitched combat was calculated to be a costly manoeuvre, but all costs would be borne in defence of the Forge World, and even the now half-burning munitions fleet was abandoned by the cold equations of survival.

All over Xana II, weapons and scanner arrays were pointed skywards, defensive grids and void shields were realigned to defend against orbital attack, while far below, subterranean mag-lev railtrains screamed at speeds past tolerance to re-arm the planet's recently spent missile silos from auxiliary stockpiles held deep beneath the world's seas. All of Xana had mobilised to repel an attack from the void, but this was not from where the attack came.

The Vengeance of the Fallen

At the orbital transfer ports of the greatest of Xana's forge-fanes: Tephra, Escorial and Setna, the Warmaster's gifts stood waiting; several hundred cargo containers divided between them, sealed and inert, ranging in size from metre-square STC pattern handling modules of a kind found in their billions across the Imperium, to megaton-capacity armoured void transit carriers intended to survive the rigours of interstellar travel intact. They had been thoroughly scanned by auspexes on their arrival and no sign of life or active power sources had been found within. Furthermore, echo scans had revealed mass and resonance readings, indicating the presence of just what had been promised; the broken bodies of the Legiones Astartes and their machineries of war. With this being the case, true to the diplomatic bargain that had been struck, not a single container had been yet breached or opened. What was to happen next remains a matter of contention by those who have looked back on this incident, and must be reassembled only by fragments of ancillary data, scattered pict- and vox-capture data from seized enemy archives and hearsay well after the fact, the truth perhaps dying with so many other truths in the losses incurred during the Siege of Terra where so much else was lost. But by all available evidence, the dead walked on Xana II.

Almost as one the cargo containers were broken and blasted open from within, ceramite-clad fists smashing through to grasp the air as if called forth by some unheard summons. Darkly armoured figures came forth in grim and silent advance, bearing the livery of the fallen Loyalists, of the Raven Guard and Salamanders Legions, even of the Imperial Fists and White Scars, but most bore the scorched and rent livery of the Iron Hands, of Clan-companies slaughtered wholesale on the black sands of Isstvan V, and more sinisterly also of Clan-companies that had fallen long before, during the darkest days of the Great Crusade. Of this army of the dead, there was no leader to be discerned, no command signals or command vox transmissions were recorded, only an oscillating electro-spectral field of unknown origin which seemed to pulse relentlessly from the tomb-containers from which they came. With them followed scores of Dreadnoughts from the larger cargo units, their shells as damaged and abused as the armour and bodies alongside which they walked, but they were no less functional for it, and behind them rumbled forth half-wrecked tanks and rapier weapons platforms, humming with power and the rattle of loading shells. Those nearby automata and tech-thralls that met this sudden onslaught were overwhelmed in moments and the silent army quickly fanned out, ramshackle and here and there stumbling on broken limbs and reeling as it went, but still with deadly speed and murderous purpose. Soon alarms sounded and the defenders of Xana, their unceasing vigilance set skyward, turned to make swift counter-attack to the invaders in their midst and found themselves facing a foe of singular, suicidal ferocity.

Adsecularis techguard clades and servo-thralls barracked near the starports were the first troops to respond, but quickly proved no match for the grim tide of death pouring from the cargo containers, their bodies broken by unwavering volleys of bolter fire or simply ripped apart in hand-to-hand combat too one-sided to deserve the name. Taghmata Castellax maniples and Tech-Priest-commanded heavy weapons detachments soon reached the fray but found themselves dealing with Legiones Astartes who fought and died with cold, unyielding fury which seemed to transcend injury and death even more than the fame of the Legiones Astartes proclaimed. Dark armoured bodies shorn of limbs or severed in half by mauler cannon still dragged themselves onward to the attack, while tanks which should have been rendered inoperable thrice over by damage hauled themselves on as burning wrecks, their weapons still firing even as their own munition stores began to cook and detonate. The Xanite battle-automata were set upon by crawling phosphex and enervated by rad missiles, weakened prey before the marauding talons of Dreadnoughts which tore them limb from limb or pounded them into ruin. The vengeful fallen pressed on, there was no attempt made to secure the port facilities or to consolidate a line of battle, the army's imperative was simply to destroy, to kill and keep on killing, until they themselves were slain. By the time the Vodian Consistory, reeling from this fresh assault, realised the true danger of what was happening, it was too late. The breakout was underway and the invaders could not be contained.

Slowly but inexorably, the invading Legiones Astartes spread through the upper reaches of the forge-fanes, massacre and mayhem their only strategic goal. Savants and soldiers,

servo-thrall and battle-automata, Tech-Priest and slave; all were left slaughtered. In their wake fires burned beyond control, crawling phosphex seeped through ventilation shafts and ate hungrily at anything it touched, power transition systems were blasted and sabotaged, fuel lines set to blaze and vox towers toppled. The surface levels of the great forge-fanes of Xana began to burn.

Breakout

By the fifteenth hour after open hostilities had begun, the Xana System was awash in flame and spiralling wreckage. The remaining Xanite war fleet, which had engaged the *Amphion's* battlegroup, was now hurtling back to Xana II. The Mechanicum fleet was now about a third only of its early strength, having sustained further heavy losses in disengaging from the Loyalist capital ships, which had used the surviving fire ships against them as they tried to withdraw. The surviving Loyalist battlegroup, including the battered but unconquered *Amphion*, did not pursue, instead taking the opportunity to disengage themselves, their own arsenals having been all but exhausted by the protracted void battle and each one having sustained great damage from the fight. In the debris belt of Xana I, now aglow with burning hulks and torn by storms of exploding munitions, the outcome for the vast arms fleet had been even more disastrous as more than two thirds of the macro-transports had been either destroyed outright or sent burning to plunge into the gravity well of the gas giant or to tumble helplessly into the void. The architects of this disaster, the *Dark Sovereign* and the Legions Astartes of the I[st] Legion, were also departing for the system's edge, one of the great barques and the dromond Mu-571, now the Dark Angels' prizes, struggling to keep up with the warship's escape velocity. The fires raged also on the surface of Xana II, though now the whole Forge World had risen up against the invaders they had allowed into their midst.

Of the three great forge-fanes, only Setna had come through its attack all but intact; the invaders having penetrated as far as the vast, sub-surface galleries before being met by Setna's most bellicose guardians, a contingent of Knights of House Malinax, long veterans of war far from Xana's soil. Here the grim Legiones Astartes had been met by a score of Mechanicum-patterned Knights, and though nearly half of the Knights present had perished in countering the onslaught, the invaders had been burned and crushed in their hundreds, the fighting halting only when the last of the Space Marines had been bodily broken beyond whatever bitter thread of life propelled it. The other two great forge-fanes of Xana had not fared so well and of the two, famed Tephra had suffered greatly, with one of its mighty reactors breached and detonated, rending several square kilometres of its heart into radioactive slag at the cost of tens of thousands of lives lost and vast resources of machinery destroyed before the invaders were finally overwhelmed through sheer weight of numbers. The damage to its sister forge-fane of Escorial was not as great, but widely diffuse, the enemy having spread to its tangled arteries of tunnel-way and gantry, and the last remnants of the invaders, though reduced to a mere handful of ruined bodies, were still causing havoc in the depths.

Matters on Xana-Tisiphone had ended in an even bloodier state, the prison-forge itself had fallen under the assault of the Loyalist Legiones Astartes under Endryd Haar's command and the firepower of the captured Ordinatus, the population descending to violent anarchy and revolt which further allowed Haar's forces to ransack the weapons testing facility there before being suddenly and savagely beaten back by a counter-attack from below. The forces which assaulted them, brazen-armoured Legio Cybernetica cohorts, had slumbered deep beneath the Sheaol penitentiary and was strange, hitherto unknown patterns whose almost diabolic appearance were at odds with any recorded Mechanicum pattern. Moving with unheard-of speed and predatory instinct, these battle-automata drove back the Loyalist Legiones Astartes, killing many and forcing a retreat when all that the Loyalists had gained was soon endangered, the counter-attack culminating when one of the prized Ordinatus, the *Nepothax*, was assaulted and destroyed in an attempt to recapture it. Reluctantly Haar's forces withdrew, taking their surviving prizes with them and departing the planet, their ship, the *Tyrannis*, herself sustaining heavy damage in her escape, barely outrunning the returning Xanite fleet.

The Xana Incursion was over.

Aftermath

The operation known as the Xana Incursion remained a secret of the Age of Darkness, one more battle fought unremembered and largely unknown, although a battle stranger than most, and ever afterward it has been an engagement shrouded in sinister mystery and rumour. The great provender of Xana, a bounty that may perhaps have tipped the war for either side, had been delivered into the hands only of death, save for a select portion which it is believed the Loyalists would use to their own ends during the Titandeath and the Siege of Terra itself, although the true gains of this victory or whether they were worth the great cost it took to achieve them is a judgement none can now make. Of equal enigma was the means by which the victory was gained, and in particular the true nature of the '*army of the fallen*', which was used to such lethal effect in the seemingly suicidal attack on the Forge World itself.

Ultimately, the alliance of Xana with the Traitors' cause had not been thwarted, only delayed by years, and perhaps that was enough. The Xana which was rapidly rebuilt and re-fortified and finally began to supply the Traitors with a great perfusion of ever stranger and more savage war machines in the Horus Heresy's final years —a true example of what became known as the Dark Mechanicum— was hardly recognisable from what had gone before and charged a heavy price for its support. There are some who have gone so far as to opine that in toppling Xana's existing ruling synod, the Vodian Consistory being murderously deposed from within the Forge World's own ranks soon after the incursion, caused a far darker and more dangerous order of masters to come forth. And that they took what was left on the battlefield and used it for their own infernal ends, meant it was the Imperium's own deceit and savage weapons that gave rise to the nightmare that was to come.

Dark Angels Lance-Decurion

Pelagor Marner, Squad Adjutant,
Eloi-7 Despoiler Squad
52nd Chapter of the First Host
Ordination of the Fire Wing
The Dark Angels Legion

Pelagor Marner was a Calibanite Legionary of the Dark Angels whose chapter was based upon the famed pre-Imperium warship, the *Dark Sovereign*, and whose presence is recorded in the order of battle logs for the Sibelius Campaign of 002.M31. This was the last confirmed action of the *Dark Sovereign* prior to the Horus Heresy. The path and activities of the Dark Angels relic warship between this time and its surprise attack during the covert operation known as the Xana Incursion remain unknown to surviving Imperial records, but evidence indicates that it was not part of the marshalled Dark Angels fleet during the Thramas Crusade.

Armour and Livery: The insignia and ornamentation displayed by Lance-Decurion Pelagor Marner is highly indicative of the developed systems utilised by the Dark Angels Legion by the end of the Great Crusade. This combines elements of later Unification era Av-Am techno-coven glyphographia, early iteration *Principia Belicosa* designated iconography for the Legiones Astartes and elements of the distinctive heraldic devices of the feudal Calibanite culture. As is noted in numerous sources, this fusion 'language' of livery was employed to deliver information on a number of levels by the Legion; these layers of meaning, being largely opaque to outside eyes, and maybe only visible to certain individuals within the Dark Angels. Of further note is the armour, which is of the distinctive 'Paravane' sub-type, an idiosyncratic variant of the widely issued Mark II pattern produced by the artificers of the I[st] Legion, and renowned for its enhanced void endurance and systems.

Dark Angels Legion Tactical Markings

Dark Angels Legion Icon,
Late Crusade era Common Armorial Use

Unknown Dark Angels Legionary-Primaris

Assumed: 13th Chapter of the Third Host
Terminator Assault Squad
Ordination of the Deathwing
The Dark Angels Legion
The Xana Incursion

Taken from a fragmentary vis-vox transmission recording recovered from the cortex of a fallen Xanite Mechanicum Tech-Priest at the Battle of Gaunt's Hollow in 009.M31, this image is believed to relate to the infamous Xana Incursion. Pictured in the record is a Terminator assault force engaging Thallax cohorts within the outer docking bays of a large void freighter, provisionally identified from ident-iconography as the *Thorn-Macro-878*, a former chartist High Conveyor suborned by the Xana Mechanicum faction prior to the incursion and included as part of their vast withheld fleet of supply. The identity of the Dark Angels Terminator shown in this pict-image cannot be conclusively confirmed, however from the insignia and armorial detailing, it can be ascertained that his unit is of the 13th Chapter of the Third Host; a formation not known to be assigned to the *Dark Sovereign* as a matter of course and its involvement in the incursion remains a mystery.

Armour and Livery: The individual pictured here is armoured in late-production, forge-modified Cataphractii pattern Terminator armour, with livery and insignia unique to the later deployments of the Dark Angels Legion in the era of the Great Crusade and early wars of the Horus Heresy. As well as ornate depictions of his Legion's symbol, the 'Aciarium'—the ancient Terran symbol of the angel of death of Old Night and the crossed blades of the Order of the Deathwing, the Legion's elite, also in evidence are the star of the Hexagrammaton, one of the more arcane and little understood of the Legion's core heraldic forms to outsiders, ciphered glyph forms of unknown meaning and the award of symbolic keys to this Legionary as the recognition of some onerous duty successfully discharged.

Artificer Constructed Legion Icon/Ablative Armour

Blackshield Techmarine

Forge Tyrant Erud Vahn
Xana II Infiltration Force,
Capture of the Ordinatus Minoris: Ashurax

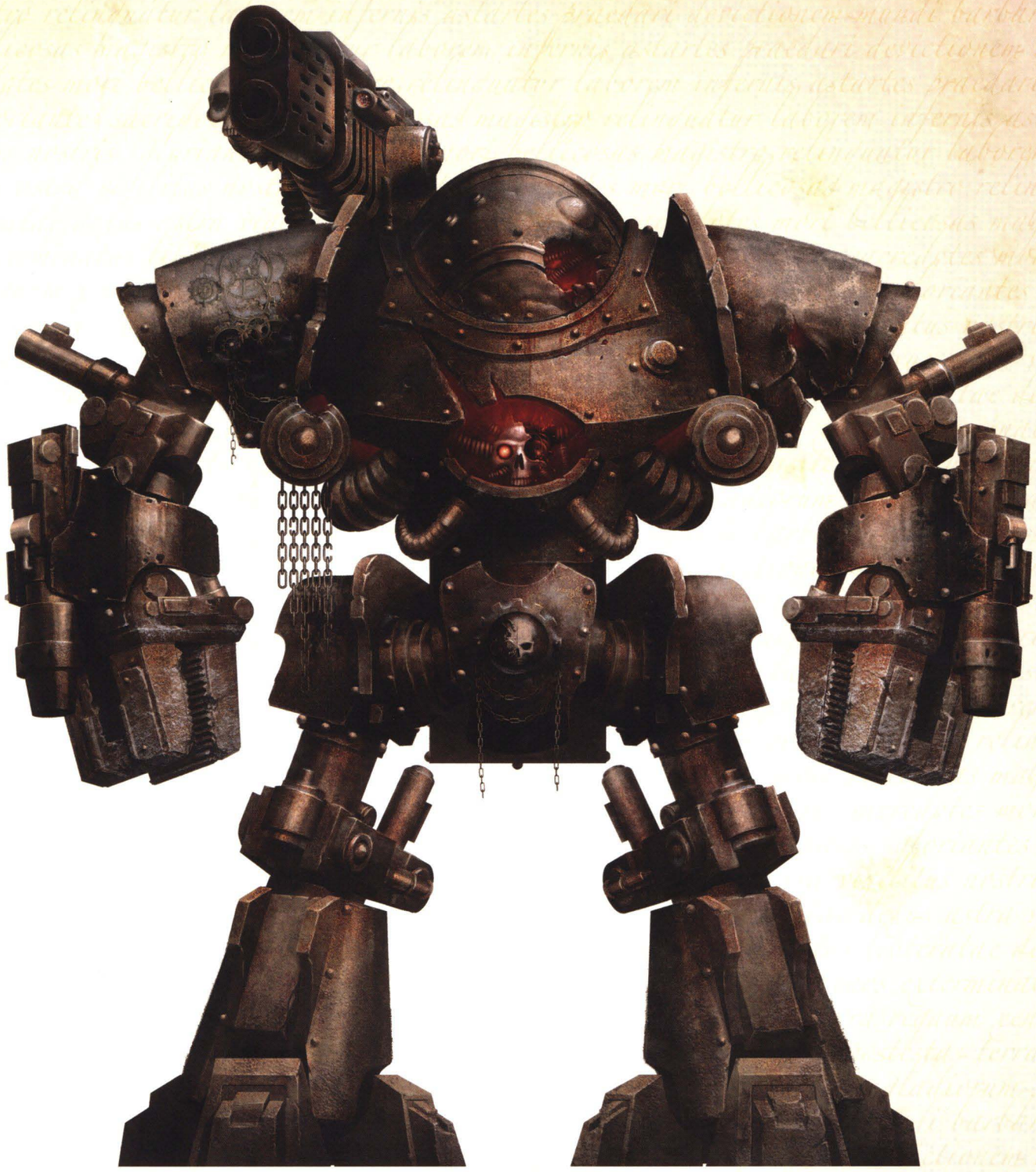
Erud Vahn had once been counted amongst the foremost Forge-Tyrants of the Death Guard. Acknowledged grudgingly by the grim master of his Legion, Mortarion, as a master of the esoteric disciplines of alkemic warfare, Vahn had spent long years in study with the tech-adepts of Mars. With the outbreak of the Horus Heresy, Vahn found his loyalty to the Mechanicum outweighed that to his distant Primarch and declared for the Loyalist cause.

Seconded to the command of Endryd Haar for his knowledge of the more esoteric mysteries of the machine cult, Erud Vahn led the force that boarded and later seized control of the Ordinatus Minoris *Ashurax*. Of the twelve Techmarines of the Loyalist Legions who entered the sanctum at the heart of the *Ashurax*, only five would survive the attempt.

Pictured here as he appeared during the Xana II incursion, Erud Vahn's heavily modified Mark III battle plate has been stripped back to bare metal before having a crude approximation of the Sons of Horus heraldry applied to it. The markings used to mask Vahn's true allegiance are in fact those of a Sons of Horus mechanised assault detachment, rather than the emblems actually employed by the Techmarines of that Legion. Fortunately for the infiltrating force, the magi of Xana had little experience with the heraldry of the Warmaster's Legion, having had little contact with much of the Imperium other than the tithe fleets of Terra.

Crude Approximation of Cthonian Heraldry

Opus Machina Insignia of the Legion Techmarines

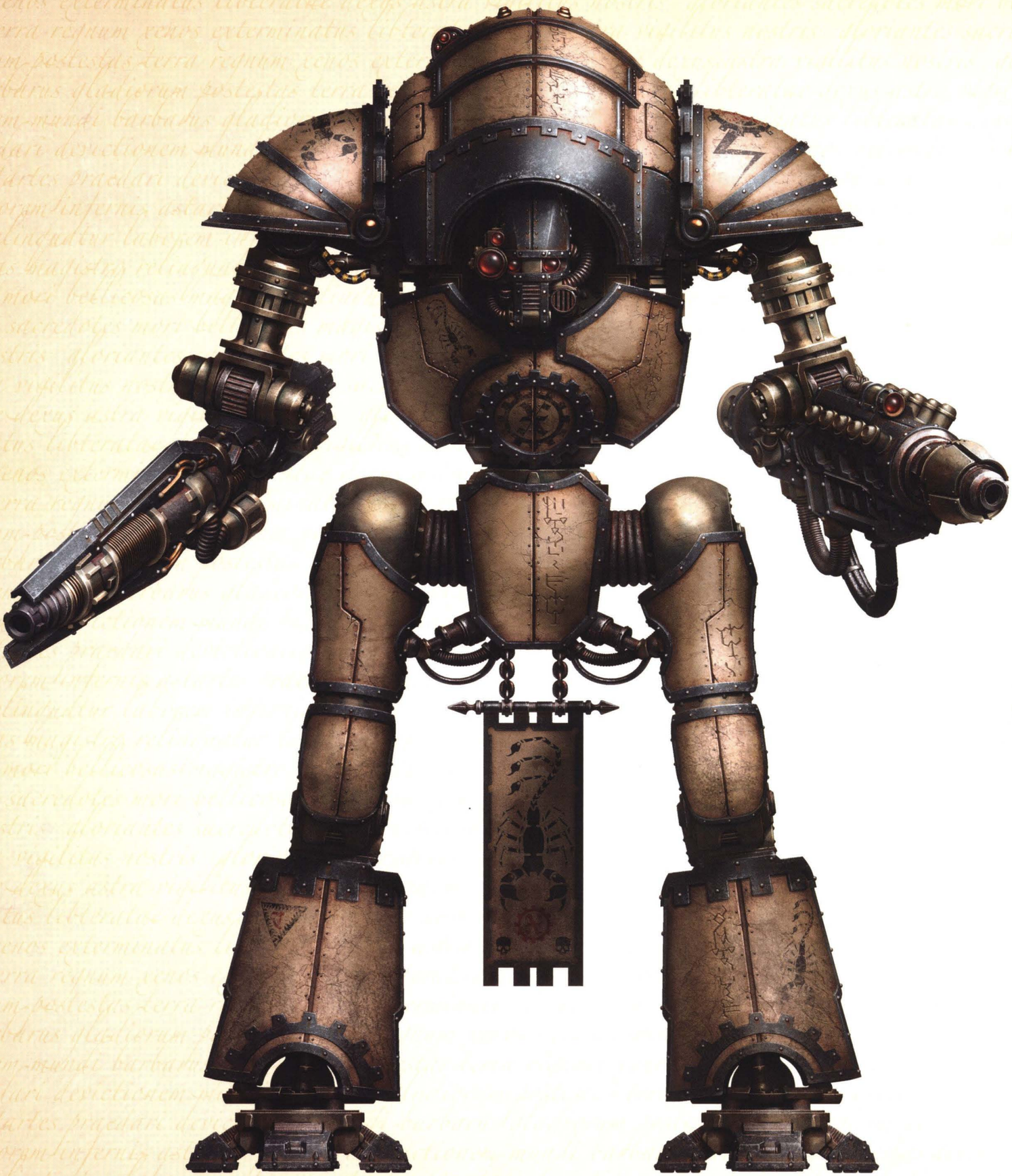


Unidentified Castellax Battle-automata

Xana II Revenant Legion

Assault on Forge-fane Escorial

This pict is taken from the catalogue data presented by the Sons of Horus to the Magi of Xana, data which lists this automata as damaged beyond repair during the conflict on Isstvan V. The catalogue of damage listed within the accompanying data-burst and visually depicted on the automata would indeed seem to indicate that the unit should have been incapable of any independent action, with damage to large segments of its neural cortex. Yet according to reports of the Xana II Incursion, this unit was one of several involved in the assault on the Escorial Forge-fane. The last Loyalist reports before the evacuation of Xana-Tisiphone list this automata, encoded as SVAROG-171, as still active in the sub-strata of Escorial, engaged in the mindless slaughter of any and all other motile entities it encountered.



Mechanicum Knight-Atrapos – 'Matonari': Pict-capture identified – the assault on Guilders Grave, leading element of attacking Knight detachment, sub-engagement; the raid on the Yellow Atoll sub-orbital transit depot in 008.M31.

House Malinax Cerastus Knight-Atrapos

The raid on the world of Guilders Grave is the first known example of the Xanite Mechanicum forces conducting an aggressive military operation to their own ends, engaging both Traitor and Loyalist auxiliary forces in open battle in order to achieve their aims of looting the mining world of its resources and heavy machinery. The vanguard of the Xanite forces during this attack were several maniples of Mechanicum Knights, at least two of which have been identified as belonging to the sinister House Malinax. This was a force which the defenders of Guilders Grave could not hope to match in firepower or resilience, resulting in a complete massacre of local forces. The Knight illustrated here as part of that raid is of the rare Cerastus Atrapos subtype, a platform for a particular set of technologically arcane weaponry intended for deployment against hardened targets and heavy armour.

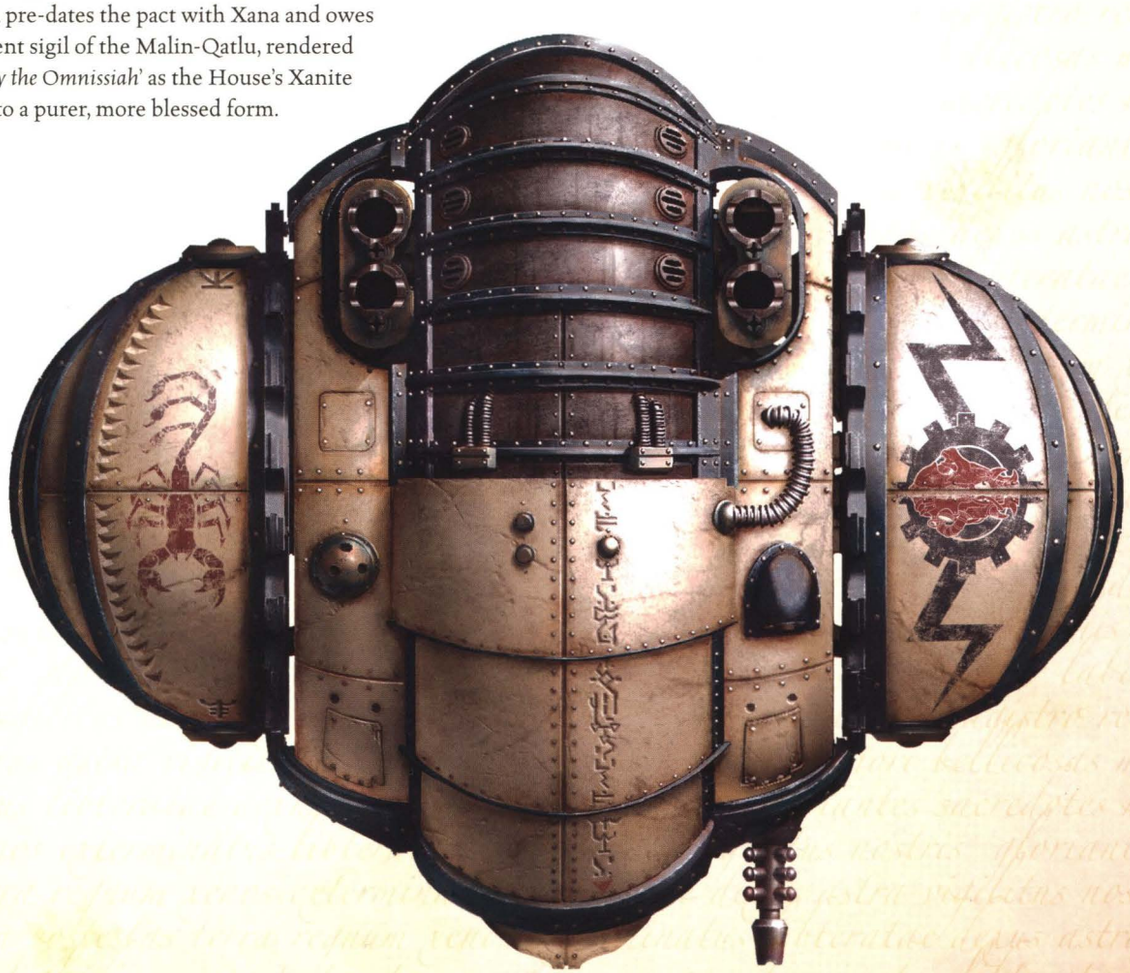
It is notable that the heraldry of this particular Knight lacks the degree of insignia detail and campaign honours that might be expected from such a singular war machine, indicating that it is relatively new in construction, a fact that speaks for the potency of the forges of Xana that they are able to create such sophisticated and rare engines of war, a feat few Forge Worlds could easily match.

Mechanicum Knight Styrix – 'Xaulhqui': Pict-capture identified – the Defence of the Barbican Gate (Forge-fane of Setna – Incursion of Xana), additional ident-markers in register; the Siege of Arrian Mysteries, the Brycantia Purge, the Tyrian Suppression.

House Malinax Knight Styrix 'Xaulhqui'

The Knight House of Malinax was founded shortly after the incorporation of the Forge World of Xana into the Imperium as part of the re-alignment of native Xanite armed forces to better serve the Great Crusade. This would include the incorporation of the Malin-Qatlu Scion Bloodline, a regressed House which was at that stage without extant world of its own and with few remaining operable Knights. This cadre of scions was provided with fresh machines and bound by blood and oath to the Lords of Xana, and would form thenceforth part of Xana's new order of battle. Brought back from the edge of extinction, the newly patented house of Malinax would serve with distinction in the savage wars of the Rangdan Xenocides, and detachments would continue to serve alongside the Titans of the Legio Vultorum and the Taghmata Setna and Taghmata Scoria throughout the later Great Crusade.

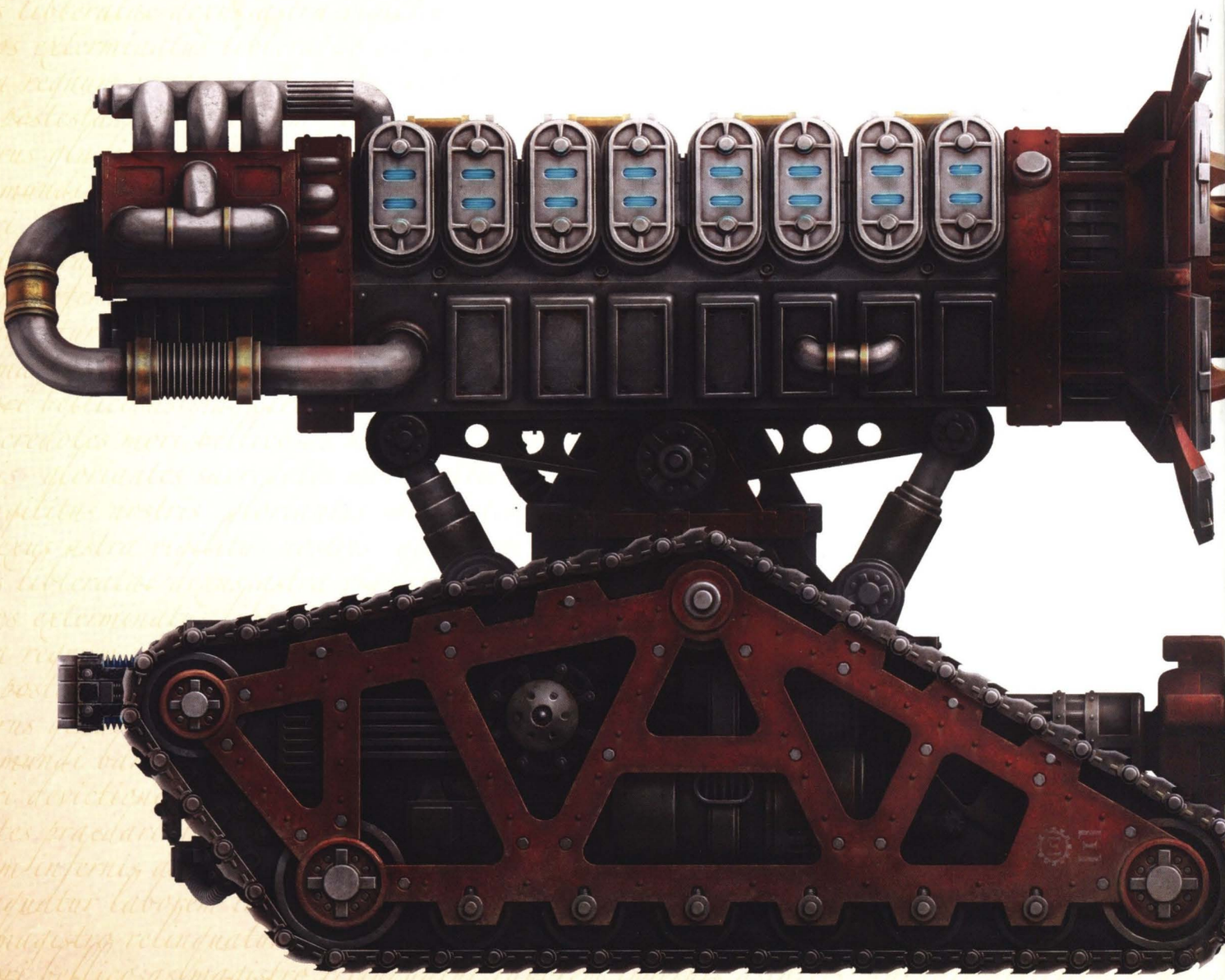
Panoply of House Malinax: Much of the heraldic panoply of the re-formed House of Malinax was taken from the predatory megafauna that was surprisingly common on the Forge World on which they were homed. The distinctive colouration of their primary armour was in fact ritually created from the dense, silicate-rich bone plates harvested from Xana's gigantic armoured Regathok Ursids, the augmented skull of which also forms the core icon of Xana's Taghmata forces. The tripled-tailed scorpion, however, pre-dates the pact with Xana and owes its origin, the ancient sigil of the Malin-Qatlu, rendered now *'Transfigured by the Omnissiah'* as the House's Xanite Sacristans have it, to a purer, more blessed form.



Ordinatus Minoris Ulator: Ashurax

In the days before the outbreak of the Horus Heresy, Xana II rivalled the greatest of Forge Worlds of the Imperium for their command of the arcane secrets of the Machine Cult and the sheer scale of their production capacity. Their capability to produce Ordinatus Minoris, even in a supremely limited capacity, is a feat that a mere handful of other Forge Worlds could duplicate, and one that caused a great stir among the magi of Mars—for the secrets of the manufacture of such titanic engines of war were closely guarded and whose appearance on the very edges of Imperial space where no such power should exist proved a deeply vexing mystery. Yet as the Horus Heresy moved from a conflict limited to a few isolated worlds to total galactic warfare, the magi of Xana revealed not a single example of such devastating artifice, but three, all destined to augment the Warmaster's already potent hordes.

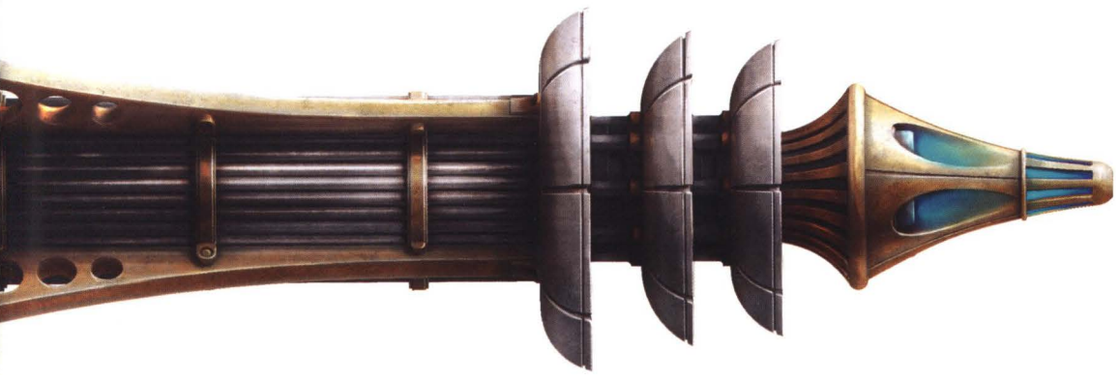
The few records of Xana that survived the Horus Heresy show that the Ulator class Ordinatus Minoris was the only artefact of this scale that the magi retained the required knowledge to construct, or at least the only class that has ever been known to have been fabricated by those reclusive magi. The Ulator class Ordinatus is built around a colossal sonic destructor; a directional sonic transduction generator that was capable of sweeping a battlefield clean of enemy combatants and armour. Generating a hyper-destructive wave-pulse that resonated with force equal to the mass of the object struck, the impact of the weapon was as deadly to the mighty super-heavy tanks of the Legiones Astartes as it was to the humble infantryman of the Imperial Auxilia. This awe inspiring weapon, rivalling as it did the destructive power of the mighty God-engines of the

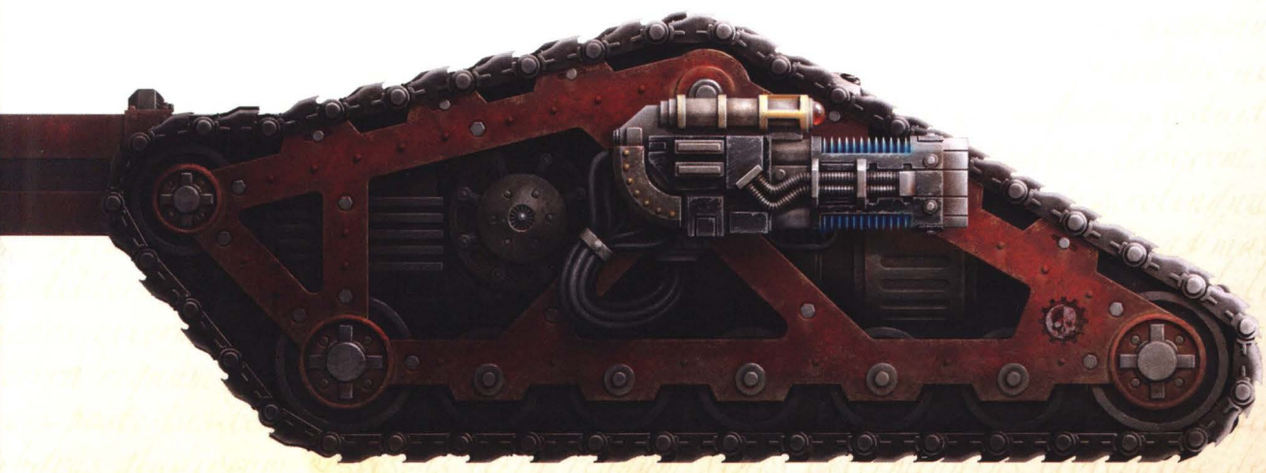


Legio Titanicus, was the main focus of the Ordinatus' artifice. The main structure of the vehicle itself was a reinforced tractor unit to allow the weapon to be moved into firing position and in which to mount the immense fusion reactor required to power the sonic destructor.

The example displayed here is the Ordinatus Minoris A*shurax*, one of two Ordinatus captured by the Imperial-aligned force that raided Xana II in 007.M31. Control of the A*shurax* was seized by a cabal of Loyalist Techmarines, of whom seven suffered fatal neuro-cortical damage as they attempted to master the unchained machine-spirit the magi of Xana had bound to the workings of the Ordinatus. Its subsequent live-fire testing saw the decimation of those taghma the Xanite magi ordered forth to reclaim the priceless artefact.

Safely evacuated from the surface of Xana-Tisiphone, the A*shurax* was removed to Beta-Garmon, there to rest in the hands of Loyalist tech-magi charged with its maintenance until the campaign known only as the Titandeath unfolded on that same world.





Eye of the Storm

"In the eye of the storm there lies truth, for it is better to perish in the cold depths of the void than to be cast down to the surface of some hateful orb, there to flounder worm-like and craven."

Ishmael the Ancient

One of countless shadow wars fought during the Age of Darkness which would only be known to history by the piecing together of scattered archival fragments, the war for the region to the galactic south-west of the warp phenomenon known as the Maelstrom was one fought far from the front lines and outside of the chain of command of either side. When word of the Horus Heresy reached the individual planetary rulers, most recoiled in horror at the Warmaster's base betrayal, yet none dared declare openly against him for they dreaded the gaze of Horus and knew that should they provoke his wrath, he could crush them out of hand. Several lonely voices denounced such vacillation as craven and dishonourable, imploring the Imperial Commanders of the region to stand together in common defiance of the Traitors, yet these voices were few and quickly silenced.

It was against this backdrop of dread and recrimination that the worlds of the region began to suffer a range of creeping horrors. It began with Astropaths reporting strange echoes upon the ætheric currents and quickly escalated as Navigators guiding merchant vessels along the region's outlying warp routes perceived an oncoming storm front that would be the doom of any foolish enough to attempt to sail its currents. At that time, none could know of the great and terrible rite that the Traitor Primarch Lorgar had enacted at Calth, that in the sacrificial murder of the Veridia star he had brought the Ruinstorm into being, a tempest of such scale and ferocity that the Imperium would be sundered. As the shock wave of the Ruinstorm struck the Pale Stars, terror and insanity erupted across the region's worlds. Entire choirs of Astropaths perished in hideous torment while dozens of vessels were lost to the Warp with thousands of souls cast to its hungry tides. The masses rose up in madness, either in blind anarchy or driven by ranting demagogues and wild-eyed preachers, who in retrospect must surely have bided their time for just such a moment. Religions, sects and cults cast down by the Imperial Truth decades before resurged in force and people whose grandsires had once prostrated themselves before heathen idols spontaneously resurrected the most terrible of practices.

Thus, as the light of Terra was smothered by the oncoming Ruinstorm, so entire swathes of the galaxy fell silent to the masters of the Imperium. The loyalties of the worlds of the Pale Stars remained unknown to Terra, lost to the galaxy-wide clamour of all-consuming civil war. But for the coming of a great, yet unsung hero of the Imperium, the fate of the Pale Stars might have gone unremarked in the story of the great Horus Heresy; that warrior was Nathaniel Garro—the so-called '*Agentia Primus*' of the Knights-Errant.

Historia Terra Regnum

Labelled on ancient void charts as the Sea of Pallid Stars and known to many simply as the Pale Stars, the sickly blue-white orbs of this region were all born of a common stellar nursery and they cast a wan, baleful light upon their satellites. These systems were known by void-mariners to be rich in mineral resources, yet were regarded by some as ill-fortuned, as if birthed of some unfathomable cosmic woe.

It was the 771st Expeditionary Fleet that first charted the region, encountering numerous devolved human cultures and several xenos strains, which the attached XIXth Legion elements purged unto extinction. Later on in the Great Crusade, the 'Bloody' 13th Expeditionary Fleet passed through the area, leaving a red wake behind it that would seed in many of the populace a deep and abiding fear of the Legiones Astartes. At the time of the outbreak of Mankind's galactic civil war, the Pale Stars region had yet to ascend to the status of a sector, but its principal world —Phargos Rex— was host to a Terran Administration mission that was the de facto gubernatorial authority across several dozen developing and frontier sovereign domains.

The Cartographica Imperialis, Ch. XV, Vs. LI-LV

Envoy of Terra

With the Ruinstorm surging across the galaxy, the War Council of Terra sought by any means to gauge the true scope of the unfolding calamity. Blinded as it was, the Council was desperate for other ways to measure the disposition of the Warmaster's hosts and the allegiances of planetary rulers. Astro-telepathic communication was by that point all but impossible, the Warp a howling cacophony that either drowned out their messages or corrupted their content in insidious ways. The only means of assaying the status and allegiance of the scattered worlds of the Imperium would be to despatch envoys and agents to do so in person, even though the Council knew that such a hazardous mission would be the deaths of countless loyal and devoted servants of Terra. One amongst these was Lorn Orpheus, a minor scion of the celebrated Orpheus dynasty of Rogue Traders Militant. Lorn was assigned the Pale Stars as his destination having gained some knowledge of the region while serving in the pathfinder flotillas that ranged ahead of the 771st Expeditionary Fleet during the initial Compliance campaign. The assignment might have been regarded by many as a death sentence, but Lorn was possessed of an adventurer's spirit wedded to a fierce instinct for survival, and saw in it a sure means of rapidly ascending the ranks of the Orpheus Dynasty.

Convergence

Even as Lorn Orpheus was readying his flotilla at the Luna shipyards, other forces were converging upon the Pale Stars. One was an alliance of Legiones Astartes who had, each for their own very different reasons, renounced or severed their ties to their sire-Legion and obscured their heraldry; the other served an equally shadowed cause, albeit one that most others associated with the Traitors—the Alpha Legion. Which faction came to the Pale Stars first is one detail amongst many now lost to history and none can tell if their appearances were linked or simply coincidental—most likely the tides of the unquiet Warp simply stranded both there at the same moment in time.

The first group would come to be named the '*Dark Brotherhood*' by the peoples of the Pale Stars and later other regions, though none can tell if the group itself ever acknowledged or used this name. Very little is known for certain about the Dark Brotherhood, and even less of the circumstances of its formation, but it is clear that this band of what would become known as '*Blackshields*' had formed around a warrior known as the '*Nemean Reaver*', or simply '*the Nemean*', a title likely referring to the impenetrable artificer-wrought armour he was said to wear in battle or to suggestions that he was preternaturally strong and impossible to slay. Of the origins of this war leader very little is certain, though some accounts claim he was a Terran scion of the Ist Legion and a veteran of the Third Rangdan Xenocide, a notion at least partially borne out by elements of the sparse personal heraldry he wore and by the terrible scars that marred his features. The Nemean was a taciturn and brooding warrior and leader,

but he bound the disparate warriors of the Dark Brotherhood into a coherent whole and moved quickly to establish a haven, a sovereign domain deep in the void beyond the spiral arms where he and his brethren might forge their own destiny in a galaxy fallen to insanity.

It was at the trinary star system known as the Eridayn Cataract that the Dark Brotherhood found refuge. A dense shroud of asteroids circled the system's three stellar bodies, concealing secrets and hazards that only the most accomplished of void masters could hope to navigate. The Dark Brotherhood were possessed of such individuals, their small fleet of light but fast and agile vessels crewed by a motley assortment of void-born and captained by Legiones Astartes who had seen service in some of the most arduous campaigns of the Great Crusade. Having established a secure base of operations deep within the asteroids, the Dark Brotherhood laid claim to the entire stellar realm and the boundless natural resources that orbited its three stars. Within months the Dark Brotherhood was aggressively defending its interests, ranging the surrounding warp routes to clear them of any foe that might contest their mastery, from human and xenos void pirates to patrol vessels sent out by the small Imperialis Armada squadron stationed at Phargos Rex. In late 007.M31, the Brotherhood launched a sudden and overwhelming assault upon the nearby system of 771/51-6. There they brutally purged the human-xenos hybrid pirate clans that had preyed upon the region's outlying worlds since the time of Old Night, the Nemean executing their master by his own hand as an undisputable message to all of that abominable strain. The name of the Brotherhood's brooding reaver lord was soon known across a dozen and more systems, and whispers of his formative empire spread still further. Soon after this event came word of the arrival in the region of a Traitor Legiones Astartes strike force of the Alpha Legion, commanded by Strike Master Ijax, a bloody-handed veteran of the massacre at Isstvan V.

Strike Master Ijax had come to the Pale Stars as an emissary of the Traitor cause, his mission to ensure that the region's planetary rulers declared for the Warmaster. Instead of presenting himself directly at Phargos Rex, Ijax divided his command and despatched lieutenants as envoys across the region, each going before a planetary lord to deliver the Warmaster's missive. Each recipient was informed that their peers were being made the very same offer at the very same moment. In so doing, each ruler was compelled to reach their own decision without recourse to their fellows, the Alpha Legion envoy standing before them feeding their darkest fears about what the Warmaster's fleets might have in mind for their world while simultaneously appealing to their most venal desires with insinuations of the favour they might earn upon declaring for the Warmaster. The presence of the Dark Brotherhood however forestalled immediate acquiescence. Upon learning of the Nemean and his pocket empire, Strike Master Ijax saw at once the necessity of neutralising this rival faction and an opportunity to seal the compact with the planetary rulers. If the governors would commit their own forces to his command in the joint endeavour of ridding the Pale Stars of the Dark Brotherhood, then the Warmaster would surely bless each ruling house with his unconstrained largesse. The rulers saw no choice but to comply.

Shadow War

The compact sealed, Strike Master Ijax's sub-commanders assumed direct command of the planetary musters of a dozen worlds and their system defence flotillas. While most of these forces were but crudely equipped and barely-trained, the Alpha Legion war leaders soon remade them into highly effective armies, utilising each muster's unique knowledge of its home world and the particular skills

Blackshield Marauder Legionary

Unknown Designation
Irregular Legiones Astartes Faction –
Codified the 'Dark Brotherhood'
Pale Stars War zone [Optera/Dissolution/Larsa]

This unidentified Blackshield was active across the Pale Stars war zone between 008-010.M31. In the aftermath of the Alpha Legion's ambush of the Conclave of Optera, he fought across the Pale Stars as the Dark Brotherhood sought to consolidate control over the Eridayn Cataract. He was grievously wounded at Dissolution, where he fought as part of the infiltration force that counter-attacked an Alpha Legion strategic holdfast. After Dissolution he does not appear in any account for around a year, suggesting a prolonged period of recovery. When next witnessed in action, at Larsa, he led a squad of Blackshields against the Silver Guard of the Traitor-aligned governor of that world.

Battle Plate

The Blackshield is depicted here as he appeared at the Conclave of Optera, as part of the Nemean's retinue. He wears battle plate constituted from different Legiones Astartes armour marks, including some elements of Mark VI, which at that time was only just entering service across the Legions. Other elements of the armour are specific to what would later be retroactively classed as non-production Mark V, including the improvised externally-mounted power cabling on the chest and upper leg armour. This mixture of intermediate sub-patterns, field modifications and combining of divergent marks means that few examples of Mark V were exactly the same, especially when employed by the often highly idiosyncratic Blackshields. Note the skeletal spread-eagle icon, a common motif by which the Dark Brotherhood was known.

Presumed Icon of the
'Dark Brotherhood' Blackshield Faction

Ceramite bonding stud reinforcement

honed there. Having established a core of defensive armies on the key worlds, Ijax ordered his disparate hosts to press outwards into the Pale Stars, thousands of warriors transported in the holds of a motley armada of cargo vessels attended by Alpha Legion escort ships. The Strike Master's intent was to challenge the freedom of movement the Dark Brotherhood had enjoyed since coming to the region, and in so doing to precipitate an escalation in the conflict, dictated by his own strategic ends.

The Dark Brotherhood were far from idle as the Alpha Legion raised the planetary musters and when the Traitor-aligned fleets pressed into the void, they were immediately opposed by the Nemean's vessels. Across the warp routes of the Pale Stars, the black-hulled war ships of the Dark Brotherhood fell upon their foes, exacting a fearsome toll upon those who would oppose their mastery of the warp routes. The Traitor-aligned ships teemed with militia troops, their holds crowded way beyond capacity, and so the Blackshields' boarding actions were met with such a press of bodies that they were repulsed as often as they were successful. The Dark Brotherhood turned dozens of militia transports into charnel houses, driven by the twin goals of dissuading future attack while capturing what vessels might find employment in their own ragged fleet. The fighting was most intense where Dark Brotherhood and Alpha Legion warriors came face to face, on several occasions upon the burning bridge of some stricken vessel wracked by shuddering death throes. No quarter was given and none sought in such bitter confrontations, and countless Legionaries from both factions went to their deaths rather than concede defeat.

Dark Brotherhood and Alpha Legion war ships clashed across a dozen systems, the conflict spilling onto the surfaces of numerous worlds as the Traitor-aligned militias were deployed wherever their masters willed. The mortal hosts were mostly treated as less than cattle by Strike Master Ijax and his officers, their presence often serving as provocation to incite attack from the Nemean. The Blackshield lord was no fool however, matching the Alpha Legion's cunning with his own so that thousands-strong militia armies were often deployed to isolated regions at great effort to no effect, falling prey to hazardous local conditions or simply starving to death while the Dark Brotherhood committed their efforts elsewhere. At Larsa V for example, transport barques out of Phargos Rex deposited thirty cohorts of the planetary muster into the rhodium dune seas, which dispersed across the ergs and established a chain of fortified strongpoints. The Dark Brotherhood declined to take the bait however and within a month the entire army of occupation had perished from exposure to the highly irradiated environment.

At Mirdath, three Dark Brotherhood vessels succeeded in bypassing the quasi-sentient out-system defence monitors protecting the Traitor Mechanicum forge-fane that had long orbited in the system's outer reaches. Striking directly for the fane's macro-provender chambers, a Dark Brotherhood boarding force captured and escaped with hundreds of tonnes of high value supplies. During their escape though, they encountered some manner of mechanical horror of whipping mechadendrites that slaughtered half their number before they could break clear. It would later be determined that this creature was the product of the Mirdath forge-fane's inner foundry, the holy-of-holies where unspeakable machine blasphemies had long lain dormant.

At the outlying system of Dissolution, the Alpha Legion envoy ordered the recall of an army of occupation that had been engaged in a decades-long campaign to eradicate a primitive, yet highly pernicious native xenos strain. As the garrison forces mustered in orbit, the long-suppressed xenos rose up against the remaining colonial holdings, achieving in a single day what the garrison had fought for decades to hold at bay, and tens of thousands of settlers were sacrificed to the primitive aliens' chthonic fire-gods. Even as the militia watched its world burn from orbit, the Dark Brotherhood struck and a fierce battle erupted across Dissolution near-space. Thousands of Traitor-aligned militia died as their transports were cast burning to the surface below, but the Nemean's forces suffered concomitant losses, for the Alpha Legion had used the garrison force as bait to draw the Blackshields into an ambush by their own vessels.

Though the war that erupted across the Pale Stars divided the belligerents between those aligned to the Warmaster and their enemies, the Dark Brotherhood fought not for Terra but for their own cause. That cause, so it would later be claimed, was simple survival, the Blackshields having determined that in a galaxy fallen to darkness, survival lay in the seizing of their own destiny. The Nemean was bitterly opposed to the Traitors' campaign to force the local commanders to declare for the Warmaster, for them doing so was detrimental to his own ambitions of a safe haven for his kin. The populations of the worlds of the Pale Stars knew horror at the war the Traitors had brought to their worlds, but any who looked to the Nemean for deliverance would find only disappointment, the Dark Brotherhood unheeding of their suffering.

The Storm Rises

With the coming of war to the Pale Stars, there soon followed yet another woe. The turbulence that had afflicted the Warp for so many months now flared into a raging tempest, fuelled, so it seems to us now given what we have learned of the Empyrean, by the shedding of so much blood among the Pale Stars. The planetary musters raised at the command of Strike Master Ijax had borne the brunt of the suffering, and the losses sustained by the Alpha Legion and Blackshields were insubstantial in comparison. As the deaths mounted in increments of many thousands, so the Warp grew ever more restive, immaterial tendrils groping in the darkness towards spilled blood like unseen predators about a drowning man. Later studies would conclude that this phenomenon had been brought about with deliberate intent, but others doubt that Strike Master Ijax was fully party to the fell wisdom possessed by Erebus of the Word Bearers and his peers.

As ever more blood was shed, Dissolution, Phargos Rex, Mirdath and Larsa were subsumed in a seething mass of what Navigators once referred to as Warp/realspace interface, but which now is known by far less mundane terminology. With the storms came further waves of insurrection and insanity more intense than any before, and if but a fraction of extant accounts from this period are to be afforded any credulity, things born of the Abyss now walked amongst Mankind. Nightmares made flesh tore themselves from the shadows and fell upon the peoples of a dozen worlds, and it is said that the streets ran with torrents of blood. Worse still, great swathes of the population of Phargos Rex reportedly joined the unnamed creatures and turned upon their fellows, rendered by warp-touched madness to atavistic cannibals and savage murderers.

Witness

It was to this region of blood-stained space that Lorn Orpheus finally came. His flotilla had traversed the tumultuous warp routes from Terra, through the outer marches of

the Segmentum Solar and across the depths of the Orion-Crux void. Fewer than half of the flotilla's vessels survived the passage through the Khymaran Drift, for here they encountered the leading edge of the Ruinstorm as it surged across the galaxy. The flotilla that at last translated into realspace at Phargos Rex bore scant resemblance to that which had departed Terra months earlier. Those vessels that survived were visibly wounded, their hulls scorched black by immaterial fires and their armoured flanks rent and buckled as if they had been caught in the grasping talons of some god-daemon of ancient myth. Limping in-system, it was immediately apparent from the flood of signals, both electromagnetic and astro-telepathic, that the Pale Stars were in the grip of some terrible woe. Among the numerous names and images repeated throughout this torrent of vox and psychic traffic was that of the Nemean, as if the peoples of the Pale Stars sought his protection and protection from him in equal measure.

The envoy of the Council of Terra knew that not only had the ancient tales of the horrors of Old Night been true, but those very horrors had returned. Funeral pyres the size of cities burned across the darkness of Phargos Rex 's night side, while a pall of dense smoke obscured the terrors being inflicted upon the surface of the day side. Orpheus however had come too far and risked too much to turn tail and retreat back to Terra, if indeed a return voyage was even possible given the ever-rising intensity of the warp storms and the woeful state of his flotilla. The envoy resolved to travel to the surface and to determine if anything remained of the planetary government or the Terran administration mission that had been based there. But Orpheus was well aware of the risk he was taking, and so he prepared a message packet for Terra, to be carried through the warp storms upon the fastest vessel remaining to his flotilla.

The message that Lorn Orpheus composed for the Council of Terra was as full an accounting of the horrors that had consumed the Pale Stars as he was able to compose. He described the warp phenomena that had assailed his vessels as they braved the storms, of crewmen driven to rabid insanity and the bloodbath that had ensued. He spoke of the apparitions that had tormented them as they plied the turbulent Empyrean and which lingered still at the edges of vision even days after translation. He recounted something of the unfettered, impenetrable insanity that had drowned the vox channels and the flood of pain and horror which the few surviving Astropaths were broadcasting far and wide. He concluded his message informing them that he intended to descend to the burning surface of Phargos Rex and to seek out any vestige of authority in an effort to fulfil his mission, and to learn the identity of the individual whose name and face appeared in so many communications—the Nemean.

Dark Compliance

It would be many weeks before Orpheus' message runner reached Terra, the fact that it survived the return voyage at all nothing short of a miracle. In the meantime the horrors that afflicted the Pale Stars intensified many times over. The void boiled as other-worldly energies burst across space, the skies above each planet ripped asunder in a livid display of seething insanity. The anarchy that Orpheus had encountered at Phargos Rex cascaded outwards and subsumed each and every world in the region, millions rising up and tearing down planetary governments before turning upon their own.

Ruling bodies were compelled to flee the rioting hordes and abandon any pretence of control, and many Imperial Commanders found their authority entirely reliant upon the support of the Alpha Legion. Across the worlds of the Pale Stars, Ijax's sub-commanders deployed Legion assets to defend the rulers from their own rebelling populations and, in short order, the Strike Master became the de facto power in the region, able to precipitate the downfall of entire planetary governments simply by withdrawing his forces and allowing the mobs to exact their bloodthirsty vengeance. Even those rulers not under siege by their own peoples were acutely aware that with their planetary defence forces directly controlled by the Alpha Legion, they were entirely reliant on Ijax for protection from the Dark Brotherhood.

At a stroke, the Pale Stars had fallen to the Traitor cause—compliance to the Warmaster's dark empire had been achieved.

One of Twenty

It might have been expected that the worlds of the Pale Stars would have been lost to the Imperium, as were so many other regions. The Ruinstorm now split the galaxy asunder and hundreds, even thousands of systems were drowned in blood or brutally crushed beneath the heel of Warmaster Horus, the Great Betrayer. Countless worlds were lost for all time, consumed in the raw stuff of the Warp, their names to be struck from the stellar cartographs and their approaches seeded with navigational warning buoys. Warp travel became all but suicidal and astro-telepathic communication nigh impossible.

No doubt such a fate would indeed have befallen the Pale Stars were it not for the fact that not only did Orpheus' message runner somehow make it back to Terra, but one important detail in his message had caused it to be routed directly for the attention of Malcador the Sigillite, Regent of Terra and the second highest authority in the entire Imperium. That detail was the naming of the leader of the Dark Brotherhood.

The warrior dubbed the Nemean was already known to Malcador, for he was one of a score of Legionaries identified by the former Luna Wolf and member of the Crusader Host, Severian. The Sigillite's intent was to gather each of those named by Severian and muster them into a cadre of warriors directly under his control, a band he would dub the Knights-Errant. It fell to the most senior of these, the Agentia Primus Nathaniel Garro, to go forth into the galaxy and recruit all twenty to his master's cause. And thus Garro was dispatched to the Pale Stars, his mission to return with the leader of the Dark Brotherhood at his side that the Nemean might swear himself to the cause of Malcador the Sigillite.

The Coming of the Herald

At 017008.M31, a grey-hulled, dagger-prowed warp-sprinter named *Eusebeian Herald* plunged from the churning warp storms closing in upon the outlying system of Optera, a trail of rapidly dissolving warp-stuff forming a kilometres-long contrail in her wake. The *Herald* had been laid down at Saturn by the hands of the most skilled ship-wrights of that domain and utilised hybrid technologies jealously guarded by the Terrawatt Clans of Ancient Terra and denounced as heresy by the Martian Priesthood. Not only had she survived the tempest but she had made the journey in mere weeks and carried her passengers safely through the otherwise impenetrable Immaterium to the frontier of the Pale Stars. It was a voyage few would have dared and even fewer could have survived.

Aboard the *Eusebeian Herald* was a contingent of the Knights-Errant – Garro, formerly of the Death Guard, Zaven, once of the Emperor's Children, and Rubio, a scion of the Ultramarines. Each Legionary had been named by Severian and the Sigillite

had foreseen they would each prove vital in averting the fall of the Imperium and combating what he had prophesised would come in its aftermath. In the Dark Brotherhood and their mysterious leader, Malcador hoped to secure another weapon for his long, silent war against the darkness.

The Conclave of Optera

At Optera, Garro ordered the Astropath assigned to his mission to send forth a signal, its allegorical cipher imprint unique and composed for this specific circumstance. The message could only be understood by an Astropath bound to the service of the Legiones Astartes, and its precise content only deciphered by one whose loyalties lay truly with Terra. The message called for the recipients to gather at Optera and Garro chose as the meeting place a ruined, megalithic structure high atop a rocky plateau overlooking the cratered wastes of Optera IV. There were numerous risks inherent in the sending of such a message, but in the Sigillite's view, still greater advantage to be won, and so the Astropath's mind-song went out across the storm-wracked reaches of the Pale Stars. Twenty days later, Garro convened his parley.

In the shadows of the cyclopean ruins of the ancient alien fane, Garro and his fellow Knights-Errant waited in silence as the churning skies were split by the contrails of a dozen gunships and landing craft of varying types. Each circled about the ruined fane several times before committing to land, and after an hour, the wide temple plaza had come to resemble the landing apron of a Legiones Astartes operating base, Garro, Zaven and Rubio standing impassively at its centre.

At the appointed time, a dozen assault ramps lowered and from each vessel a group of warriors emerged, some openly bearing Legion colours, others with heraldry deliberately obscured. If Garro and his fellow Knights-Errant were at all taken aback by the Legion colours represented before them, they hid their surprise behind stony countenances or blank-faced battle helms. In truth however, aside from the black clad reavers of the Dark Brotherhood, none could have anticipated the presence of Legionaries from two other Legions.

The first such group were clad in the distinctive red and gold of the Legiones Astartes Blood Angels, a Legion which had vanished almost to a man having been despatched to the far galactic east almost five years earlier and not heard of since. It was known that a small honour guard had been drawn by lots to remain on the Legion's home world of Baal, while the remainder mustered at the Nartaba System before proceeding to follow the deployment orders issued by the Warmaster some time before his betrayal had been revealed at Isstvan. Garro was stunned to see before him a captain of the Three Hundred Companies,

Nathaniel Garro, the Agentia Primus

putting a lie to the tragedy of the supposed extinction of the IXth Legion and its beatific Primarch, the Angel Sanguinius.

The second group of warriors were clad in ivory-white battle plate, each a suit of Mark II Legiones Astartes power armour heavily modified by the Legion's artificers and bearing the lightning bolt icon of the Vth Legion—the White Scars. The status of the Vth was known to Garro, but he would not speak of such things openly, for now at least. The remainder of the Legiones Astartes who gathered beneath the towering columns of the xenos temple were a disparate band indeed. No two warriors wore exactly the same mark or pattern of armour nor carried the same class of weapon. In many cases their battle plate was a heterogeneous admixture of components clearly acquired from a wide range of sources, some elements entirely foreign even to Garro's experienced eye. The one feature common to each and every one of these warriors was the fact that their armour was uniformly black. Here and there however, micro fractures, scars and scuffs betrayed hints of older colours, from blood crimson to sea green, hinting at prior allegiances. Considering the panoply of gunmetal grey in which the Knights-Errant themselves were clad, Garro once again declined to pass comment on the strangers' appearance.

At last, the leader of each group stepped forward into the centre of the gathering and Garro did likewise, the four Legiones Astartes leaders removing their battle helms so that they could address one another face to face, according to the ancient laws of war.

The leader of the Blood Angels declared himself battle-captain of the 121st Company of the Three Hundred, naming himself Serron. Garro knew that the 121st had failed to assemble at Nartaba and Serron proceeded to recount how the war ships bearing his command had been caught in a fierce warp storm and cast upon the turbulent currents of the Immaterium. Swept along helplessly for what the Blood Angels perceived as mere days, the vessels were ejected violently from the Warp on the fringes of the Maelstrom, which for no explicable reason had been stirred into a raging vortex that cast its baleful tides for hundreds of light years in all directions. The vessels of the 121st had fought valiantly to escape the currents of the Maelstrom and, according to Serron, detected Garro's astro-telepathic call as they traversed the Mirabala Straits. Though Serron's company had known great hardship during their voyage, for them the order to muster at Nartaba had been issued mere weeks before —meanwhile, over four years had passed in the material universe.

The leader of the White Scars contingent was a cold-eyed warrior, his stony features marked by a web of intricately applied ritual scars. He named himself Nirun, leader of a band of five hundred or so Legionaries drawn from several different Legion sub-groups, known to the White Scars as '*Brotherhoods*'. Garro knew that the Brotherhoods of that Legion were far more to them than tactical divisions—each was a band of warriors so tightly knit that a Legionary could no more transfer between Brotherhoods than he could between Legions. The spectacle of a group of White Scars Legionaries drawn from different Brotherhoods was highly unusual, but Garro perceived an explanation in the warrior lodge tokens many of them bore. Every token carried the same symbol—the serrated beak of a Chogorian raptor. Nirun offered no explanation for his presence in the Pale Stars, and Garro did not seek one, for now at least.

The Shadowed Counsel

And then the leader of the Dark Brotherhood stepped forward and lowered the hood that had obscured his features. The stark light of Optera's sun revealed the warrior-leader's face as a mass of scars that twisted his mouth into a permanent scowl, his eyes jagged shards of black ice. Garro knew instantly that the Nemean was indeed the warrior he had been tasked with recruiting to the cause of Terra, but how he would do so given the presence of the remainder of the Dark Brotherhood as well as the Blood Angels and White Scars contingents was another matter entirely.

Fulcrum

Facing the three leaders gathered at the heart of the ruined xenos temple, their mustered hosts arrayed behind them, Garro began an address he hoped would stir the hearts of each and convince them to return at his side to Terra. Unsure of the extent of their knowledge of the disaster that the Warmaster had brought down upon the Imperium, he resolved to offer a true and complete account of events, knowing that in this matter above all others truth was his greatest ally. He spoke first of the events of Isstvan III, eliciting a stunned denial from Captain Serron, followed by grim-faced and stoic acceptance of his words. When he spoke of the massacre at Isstvan V, he noted a stirring in the ranks of the Dark Brotherhood, silenced at a stroke by the slightest gesture from their brooding leader. He spoke of Loyalist and Traitor, terms that were anathema to many of those gathered before him and yet seemingly familiar to others. He described the desperate battles fought along the leading edge of the Warmaster's advance on Terra and the treachery that had been brought to bear on distant Calth, describing it in his own words, for unknown to all but Rubio and Zaven, Garro himself had witnessed the horrors that had unfolded in its immediate aftermath.

All of this the three Legiones Astartes war leaders heeded with little interruption, until at the last Garro reached the crux of his mission to the Pale Stars. The Sigillite had ordered him to recruit the leader known as the Nemean into the ranks of the Knights-Errant, but before him lay the opportunity to achieve so much more. And so the Agentia Primus invited all three leaders and their warriors to return with him to Terra and to serve the Emperor's Regent in the coming war.

His address complete, Garro stepped back to stand alongside his fellow Knights-Errant and await a response. Silence rang out for an age, before at last Captain Serron stepped forward. If it was true that Sanguinius was lost, Serron declared, his grief barely contained as he spoke, then the 121st Company had no place in the galaxy other than at the very forefront of war. Serron would bend knee to no other, he swore, instead stating that he and his warriors would go forth into the fires of war and seek out the foe wherever they might be found.

Garro nodded grimly, knowing from the cast of Serron's voice that the Blood Angel would consider no other path. With those words, Serron turned and departed, the Legionaries of the 121st not hesitating to follow him from the alien temple.

Next, the leader of the White Scars stepped forward to declare his position. His Primarch's wishes in this matter were unknown to him and until such time as he received orders from the Great Khan himself, Nirun would continue on his current path. What that path might be, he would not relate to the Agentia Primus nor any other, and with his refusal of Garro's offer Nirun led his warriors from the temple and was gone. At the last, the Agentia Primus and the Nemean faced each other in the centre of the cyclopean ruins, the wind that keened through the jagged marble columns the only sound. The Blackshield lord had but one question for Garro—what

of his sire? But before Garro could answer, a bright explosion blossomed in the sky far overhead, followed seconds later by the rolling thunder of an explosion—it was a sound that every warrior present had heard many times throughout his service. It was the sound of a space craft destroyed in low orbit by enemy fire. All eyes turned to the skies as debris arced downwards, each fragment as large as a gunship and trailing a churning black contrail behind. Moments later, the shout went up from the ranks of the Dark Brotherhood—a shout accusing the Knights-Errant of a betrayal as craven as any that Garro had laid at the Warmaster's feet. Weapons were drawn as curses echoed about the temple, and a second explosion rent the skies.

Garro's vox-link chimed in his ear and the captain of the *Eusebeian Herald* confirmed what he had already guessed. The Traitors must somehow have broken his Astropath's cipher, a feat that only the Alpha Legion could achieve. In an instant, chaos claimed the formerly solemn gathering. Blackshields bellowed in rage or denial, some at the skies, some at their brothers but the greater number at Garro and the other two Knights-Errant. It appeared in that instant that Garro's entire mission to the Pale Stars stood at the brink of failure, until the Nemean spread his arms wide to ward his fractious warriors back. Locking eyes with the Agentia Primus, the Nemean repeated his earlier demand – what of his sire?

Garro answered with truth—Terra had received no word from Lion El'Jonson, the Primarch of the I[st] Legion. The Nemean responded with a solemn nod, but before he could address his band, a shouted curse went up from his warriors and gunfire split the air. The Dark Brotherhood fractured into rival groups and a vicious, close range fire fight erupted. What followed remains unknown, only that the meeting descended rapidly into armed conflict. Hard rounds and las blasts slammed into Garro as he withdrew, Rubio and Zaven attempting to drag him into cover before the weight of weapons fire grew too heavy even for his artificer-wrought Mark VI battle plate. Garro hesitated, sensing a turning point and an opportunity. Detaching a teleport homer from his belt he locked eyes with the Nemean. The other warrior took one glance at the chaos behind him and then nodded grimly. Garro thumbed an activation rune. With a flare of light and the crump of displaced air, all four were gone, teleported to safety aboard the *Herald* even as the Knights-Errant vessel dove hard through the skies above.

The Blood-stained Stars

In the aftermath of the Alpha Legion's ambush at Optera, a bloody and bitter shadow war erupted across the systems of the Pale Stars. The Dark Brotherhood carved their way across the region, slaughtering any force that stood in their way until they vanished into the Eridayn Cataract, not to be encountered again for an age. The Blood Angels under Captain Serron threw themselves into all-out conflict, as if consumed by the need to atone for the sin of their own survival. The 121st Company clashed with Alpha Legion forces deep in the tainted mines of Kyro IV, upon the inner moons of 771/58 and through the xenos-haunted mire-seas of Sidaiva. Serron's force was last seen at Psiom Zeta-1, where it broke suddenly and inexplicably from a battle they were undoubtedly winning and instigated a hasty warp jump along a vector that would have taken the small fleet broadly in the direction of the Segmentum Solar. History does not record for certain what became of the 121st, although rumours persist that at least some of the company's number were counted as present at the very climax of the great heresy.

Of the White Scars that Garro encountered at Optera, still less can be said for certain but one fact alone is known. Niron and his small force clashed with an Alpha Legion element under the direct command of Strike Master Ijax at Pharghos Rex, mere hours before the raging storms closed in upon the system and drowned it in the raw stuff of the Warp. That storm has yet to lift even now, and so the ultimate fate of both Legiones Astartes leaders remains beyond our knowledge. Though none know the reason why, the name of the White Scars leader is entered into the roll of honour of the House of Orpheus, hinting at some confluence of Nirun's fate with that of the envoy Lorn Orpheus.

All that remains then is to complete the account of Garro, Zaven, Rubio and the warrior they had come to the Pale Stars to recruit to the cause of Malcador the Sigillite. The Nemean would take his place among the twenty chosen warriors that Garro had been tasked by Malcador to gather, but that is a tale that has yet to be satisfactorily concluded. Some say that the Nemean mustered with the defenders of Terra and that he stood to the last upon the walls of the great palace as hell itself descended upon the birth world of Humanity. As with so many accounts of those final days of the Age of Darkness, the truth is hidden beneath a pall of ashes and the crushed bones of the greatest heroes of the shattered Imperium.

+Carta Imperialis:
Mare Stellum Pallidus
'The Sea of Pale Stars'+
Fief 771/38/qz
+II: Legio XIX Fief+
Optera
+IV: Devolved Technomad
Scavenger Clans+
771/47-9
+XI: Survivor population
spread across three satellites of
primary gas giant+
Death Rises
Kyro
+IV: Mining World+
+VI: Recidivist Enclaves+
771/50
771/51-6
+VII: Void-pirate Haven+
Ultima
The Eridayn
Cataract
+Macro Asteroid Field
Orbiting Trinary System+
Segmentum

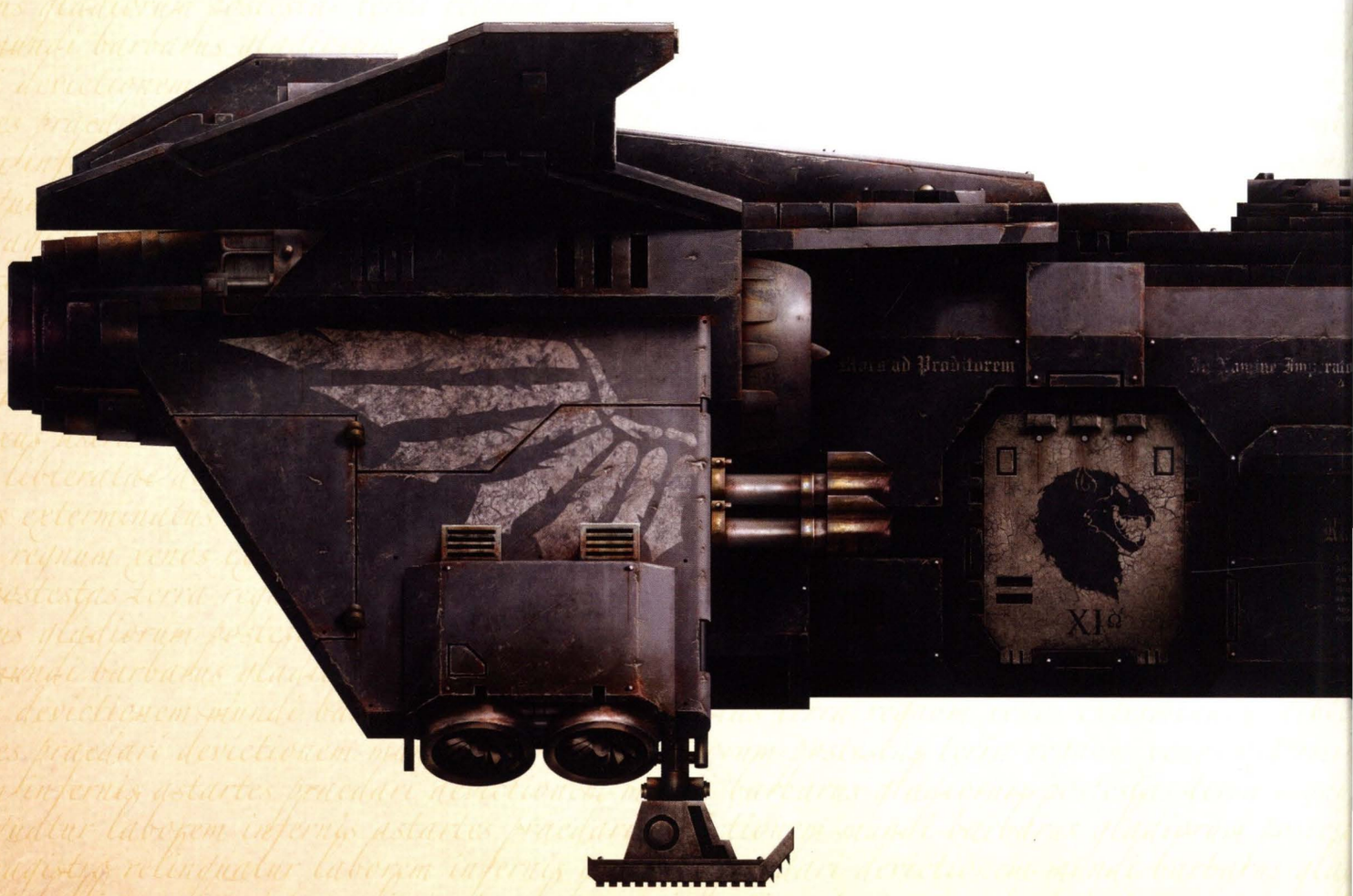
Key
Fortress Bastion
Forge World
Imperial World
Contested
Astropathic Relay
Frontier/
Unclaimed
Sidaiva
+Autocthonic Necrophage Clades+
Psiom Zeta-1
+Extinct Pre-Imperium
Human Ruins+
Larsa
+II: Ur-grade
Resource World+
Mirdath
+Out-system Void Forge+
Phargos Rex
+XX: Regional
Administratum Seat+
771/58
Dissolution
+V: Finalis Phase
Xenos-purgation+

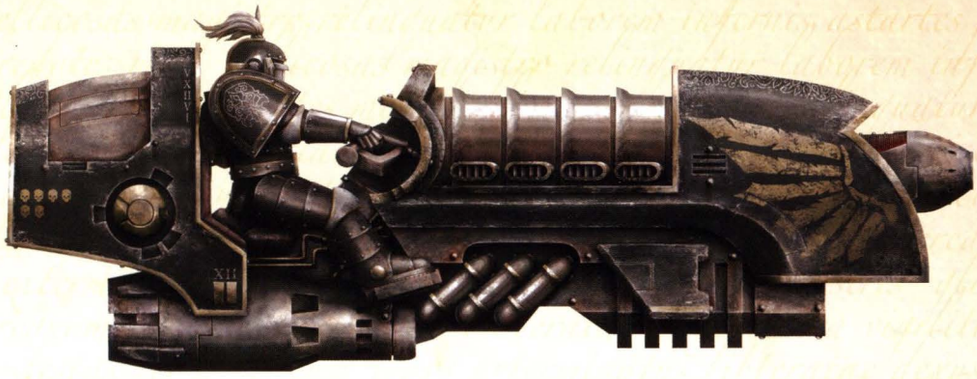
Blackshield Rapid Assault Forces

Blackshield forces are a heterogeneous mix of Legiones Astartes elements, and in theory have access to the full arsenal of weaponry and equipment the Space Marines were granted at the outset of the Great Crusade. In practice however, most Blackshield groups abandoned the use of heavier war machines such as super-heavy tanks, as well as static defences and heavy equipment that required support or recovery units to retrieve after battle, in particular the range of drop pods used throughout the Legiones Astartes. Instead, most Blackshield forces favoured lighter, multi-purpose vehicles that complemented their particular mode of warfare—rapid orbital insertion followed by highly mission-focused assaults, quickly backed up by the exfiltration of all attack elements. To this end, although no two Blackshield forces were exactly alike, most made extensive use of Storm Eagle gunships, while most had access to at least a handful of Thunderhawk gunships. The most fortunate could call upon the lighter patterns of Stormbird lander, the most prized being the Sokar pattern.

In general, most Blackshield forces deployed only those ground units that could be rapidly set down onto a planet's surface from orbit, limiting ground vehicles to Rhino and Land Raider variants that could be carried by a Thunderhawk Transporter or within the hold of a Sokar pattern Stormbird. Nevertheless, there were several known exceptions and not every Blackshield force operated in this manner; the group known as the Gerasene Host, for example, deployed without warning into the northern sulphur deserts of Treab's World and fought for many months before departing just as suddenly using craft they are thought to have secreted in hidden caverns near the planet's northern pole.

In common with the Blackshield warriors themselves, most vehicles had their original Legion heraldry deliberately obscured. As the Horus Heresy ground on, many individual Blackshield groups developed their own unique heraldic identifiers or came to use their own often highly idiosyncratic sigils and identifiers. The Dark Brotherhood for example, came to be known for the use of a ragged, skeletal version of the Imperial Aquila, rendered in ghostly white or pale gold. It was by such symbols of death and doom that many Blackshield groups would become known, making for a spectacle as terrifying as any Legion force deployed in the armies of Loyalist or Traitor alike.





Blackshield Jetbike: The Scimitar pattern Jetbike depicted here was encountered by Loyalist forces in several war zones across the Pale Stars region. The identity of the Legionary rider remains unconfirmed, but several noted historator-adepts believe him to be a former White Scars Legionary of the so-called '*Brotherhood of the Foresworn*', who subsequently renounced his Legion entirely and joined the ranks of the Dark Brotherhood. This theory is supported by the Legionary's sporting of a pattern of Legiones Astartes power armour helm unique to the Vth Legion, although it is entirely possible that the warrior obtained this from the body of a slain White Scars Legionary.

Legion Storm Eagle of the Dark Brotherhood: This vessel was used by the Blackshield leader called the Nemean at the Conclave of Optera, and bears heraldry and adornment unique to him and which hint at his origins. The text on the vessel's flanks appears to reference several battles of the Third Rangdan Xenocide, a campaign of apocalyptic proportions prosecuted by the Ist Legion and its allies across vast swathes of the galactic north-west.

Alpha Legion Assault Sergeant

Identity Unconfirmed
Ad-hoc Traitor Formation
Pale Stars War Zone [Phargos Rex Incursion]

The identity of this Alpha Legion warrior cannot be confirmed, for it appears his armour's transponder unit had been set to cycle through myriad different and entirely contradictory imicus/inimicus signal bursts. He is however known by his heraldry, panoply of war and observed tactical proclivities to have served across the Pale Stars war zone in the force of the Alpha Legion commander Strike Master Ijax. He is known to have engaged the Blackshields of the Dark Brotherhood at Optera V and VII, as well as White Scars units at Sidaiva and elements of the Blood Angels 121st Company at Mirdath II/c. The last recorded contact was at Phargos Rex, a mere two days before the warp storms consumed that entire system and nothing of it, its overlords or its population was ever heard of again.

Alpha Legion Armour and Livery

The warrior wears Mark IV Legiones Astartes battle plate, with helm and pauldron wrought by the Legion's master artificers into a form unique to the XXth Legion. In common with the operational doctrines of the Alpha Legion, the warrior's armour bears few if any tactical markings, the intent being to keep the enemy guessing as to which Legion sub-unit they might be facing. The armour shows extensive armorial adornment in the form of variants of the Legion's three-headed hydra icon, and the green stripe on the helm is likely to indicate the warrior's rank as a sergeant.

'Aleph-Null' Alpha Legion Iconography, Unknown Provenance

'Hydra' Alpha Legion Iconography, Observed during Late-Crusade

Alpha Legion Veteran Tactical Legionary

Unnamed Veteran Legionary
Unknown Legion Sub-unit
(Unconfirmed 700th Strike-echelon)
Pale Stars War Zone [Fall of Phargos Rex]

This unnamed Alpha Legion warrior served under the Legion commander Strike Master Ijax throughout much of the conflict in the Pale Stars region. The warrior's exact position and rank is impossible to discern, for the Alpha Legion typically utilise markings and insignia specifically designed to mislead those attempting to decipher them. The bronze face plate on the Mark V helm suggests that the warrior may have served in a Legion command squad, as this convention was known to be in use across several Legions throughout the later Great Crusade, but this should not be taken for granted given the Alpha Legion's tendency to deliberately obscure tactical markings.

Alpha Legion Armour and Livery

The unnamed warrior is known to have taken part in the ambush on the Conclave of Optera, and was subsequently engaged in battle against mixed Loyalist forces at the Kyro System. The last engagement in which the warrior was observed fighting was fought against the White Scars of the war leader Niron at Phargos Rex, and it is unknown if he survived the battle and the subsequent descent of the warp storm that consumed the entire system soon after. The warrior is clad in the power armour configuration later codified as production Mark V, the source of which is unknown.

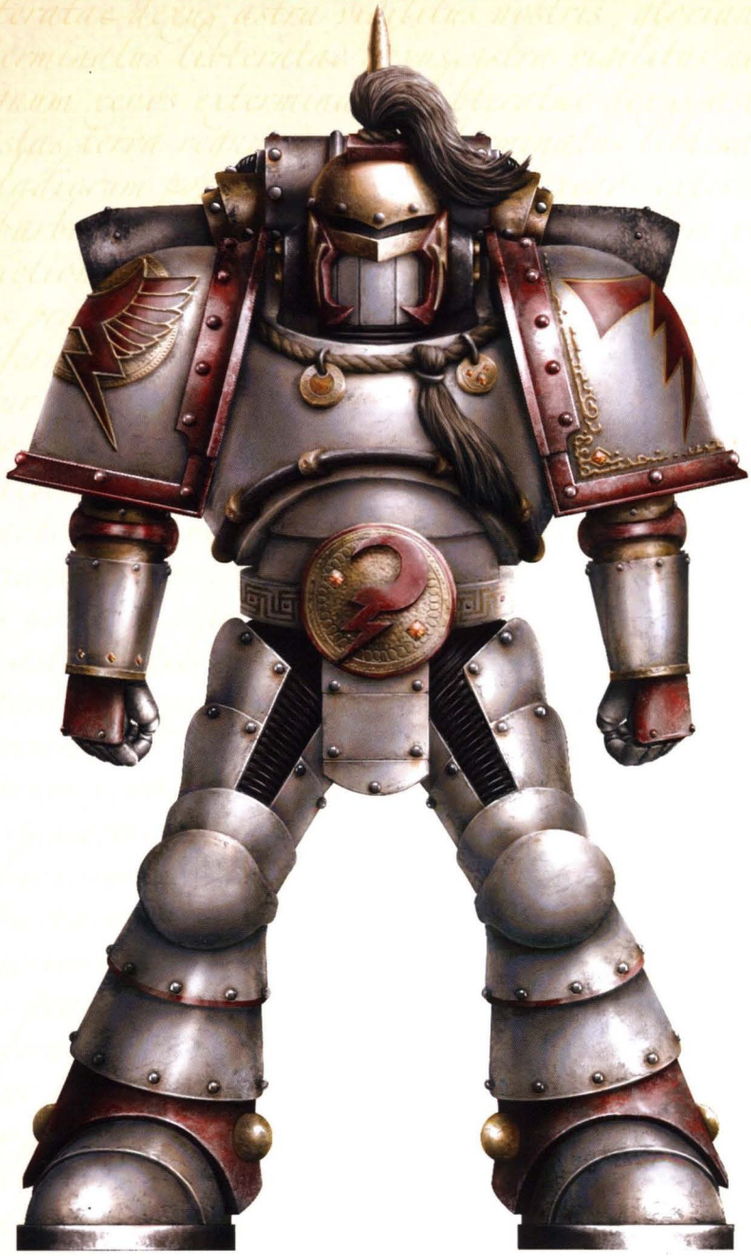
Alpha Legion Iconography, incorporating Hydra and 'Unbroken Chain' Iconography, Specific Meaning Unknown

Ceramite bonding stud reinforcement

White Scars Tactical Legionary

Legionary Khasar
Brotherhood of the Foresworn
Pale Stars War Zone [Phargos Rex Intervention / Flame Nebula War]

The Brotherhood to which this Legionary originally belonged had its honorific revoked in 955.M30 following its near-total destruction in battle against the xenos Barghesi. The defeated force was referred to as the Foresworn when mentioned at all, and appears in no official primary Legion records of the Great Crusade. Over six decades later however, elements of the Foresworn appeared fighting for the Loyalist cause, first in the Pale Stars and later in other far flung theatres of war. The Foresworn were but one Brotherhood represented among the ranks of the White Scars that answered the call of Nathaniel Garro and attended the Conclave of Optera, the others equally shrouded in their founding.



White Scars Armour Modifications

Legionary Khasar's battle plate is typical of that worn by the White Scars, being clearly derived from a suit of Mark II 'Crusade' armour, the helm and chest plate substantially modified by Legion Techmarine armourers. The Legion frequently served as far-ranging pathfinders ahead of the Expeditionary fleets of the Great Crusade, and was therefore separated from reliable lines of supply for extended periods. Where most Legions were supplied en masse with new marks of armour, weapons and war machines, the White Scars often retained items they were issued at the outset of a campaign, repairing equipment when damaged, adapting it to their needs and adorning it with elements unique to the culture of their home world of Chogoris.

White Scars Variant Icon, Rite of the Riven Moon

White Scars Legion Icon, Common Armourial Use

Blood Angels Tactical Legionary

Legionary Sabraham
121st Company
Pale Stars War Zone [Raid on Kyro IV]

Legionary Sabraham was a member of a Legion tactical squad at the time the Blood Angels were ordered to muster at the Nartaba System in preparation for the campaign in the Signus Cluster, but like the rest of the 121st Company never deployed to that operation. When the company's vessels were cast upon the tides of the Warp, its members were spread across the small flotilla, each sub-unit believing for a time that it would meet its end upon the raging tides of unreality, until finally translating to a pocket of comparative calm coreward of the Maelstrom. Sabraham was present at the Conclave of Optera and survived the Alpha Legion's ambush to fight in subsequent battles in the region.

Blood Angels Armour and Livery

Sabraham is depicted here as he deployed to the fighting in the depths of the mines of Kyro IV, where it is thought he fell in glory when his squad was overwhelmed by a savage tide of the eyeless abhuman slaves who worked the mines, turned, so it is believed, into living weapons by the machinations of the Alpha Legion. His Mark IV Legiones Astartes power armour was newly issued at the time of the Nartaba muster, and Sabraham's suit is one of many such sub-types unique to the Blood Angels. The suit's surface is adorned with armorial detail added by highly-skilled Legion serfs, as befits the traditions of this most noble of Legions.

Blood Angels Legion Icon, Artificer Variant

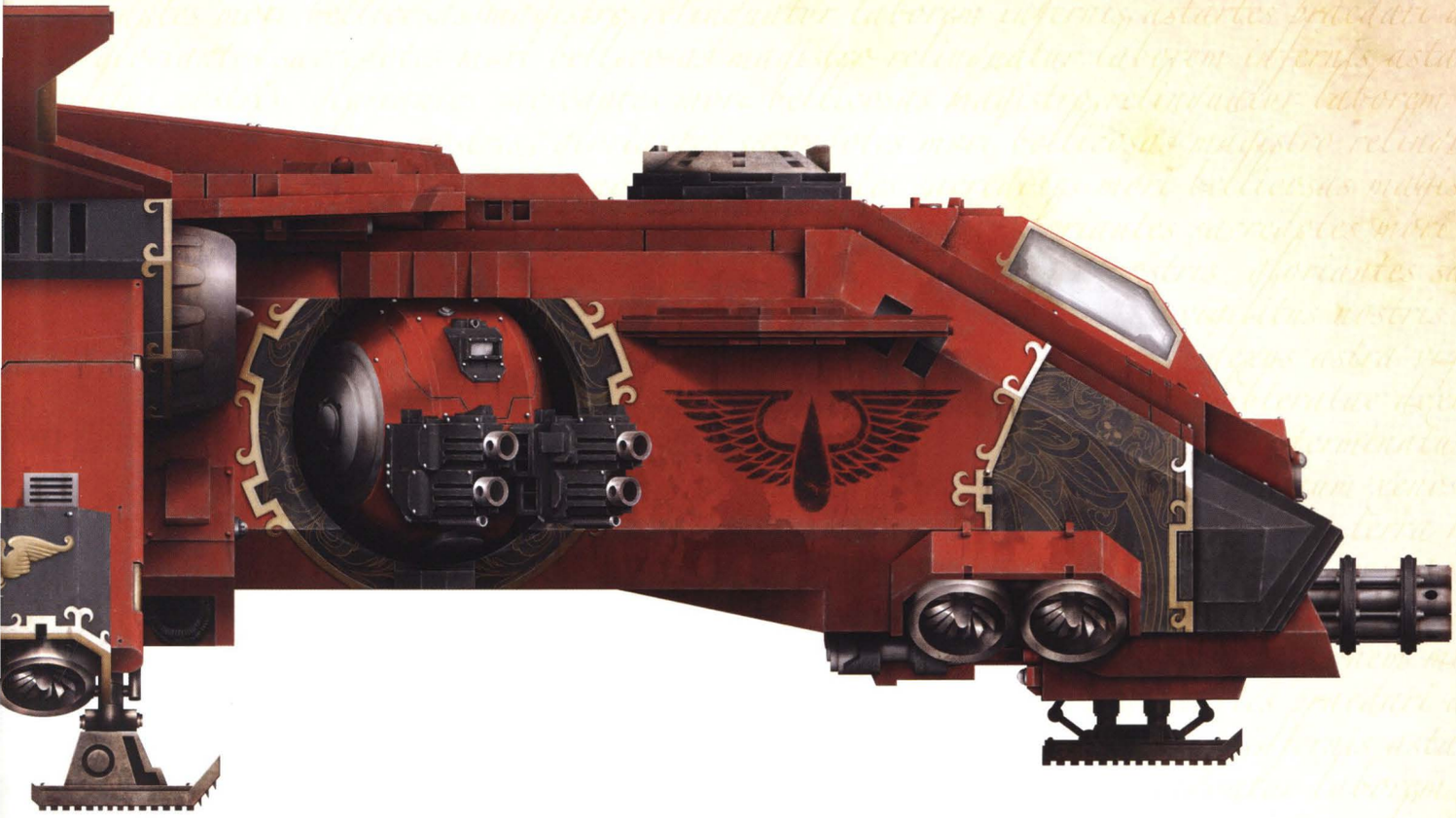
Principia Belicosa Tactical Icon

Armoured Hosts of the Blood Angels

The Blood Angels Legion is possessed of the full panoply of war laid down by the architects of the wars of the Great Crusade, and masters in the use of them all. The Legion's forge is noted above all others for the care and attention it lavishes upon its equipment and war machines, from the most ubiquitous boltgun to the mightiest of battle barges. This phenomenon is witnessed most often in the exacting maintenance protocols carried out on its armoured vehicles and, most strikingly, in the adornment applied to their flanks.

The IXth Legion maintains a uniquely skilled cadre of bonded artisan-serfs, its ranks filled with individuals whose names may never be known to the greater Imperium, but who must surely rank among the greatest artists of the age. Their sole task is to render glory to the Blood Angels Primarch, the Angel Sanguinius, and through him the Emperor Himself. This is not done through vanity, as so many have claimed of the IIIrd Legion for example, but in pursuit of the higher purpose for which the Blood Angels were created—to engender hope and strike awe into the hearts of those long lost in the darkness of Old Night, and to inspire stark terror in those who would reject the gift that is the Imperial Truth or threaten the glorious future the Emperor intends for Mankind.

While the bulk of the IXth Legion's armoured might was mustered at the Nartaba System for deployment to the Signus Cluster, hundreds, perhaps thousands of war machines of all classes remained in reserve at the Legion's fortress at Baal. Throughout the long years that the Blood Angels were lost, their fate unknown to the Imperium, the artisan-serfs continued to produce the most noble and wondrous of engines of war, ready to be wielded in righteous anger against the Traitors when at last their masters returned.



Legion Fire Raptor of the Blood Angels: This gunship is depicted as it appeared at the Conclave of Optera, where it was deployed to provide air cover to the Blood Angels on the ground, but did not at any point land. The level of adornment is typical of the IXth Legion, which in other Legions might only be applied to a vehicle in the personal service of a high-ranking officer.

Legion Spartan of the Blood Angels: This vehicle belonged to the 121st Company of the Blood Angels and served as transport for the company's elite Legion Terminator squads. The mural applied to the vehicle's flank is of a type used throughout the Legion and an example of the work of the master artisan-serf Marcellon of Primus. The vehicle was fielded by the 121st in at least a dozen battles fought across the Pale Stars war zone in the aftermath of the Conclave of Optera, the last of which was the assault on the surface defences of the mining world of Kyro IV.

Tooth and Claw

"I am become the Slayer, the Ancient of Days come hither to consume. Of all these hosts of treachers mustered, there stands not one shall see the dawn."

Fragment, Ch XI, Song of the Lords

No accounting of the myriad wars of the Age of Darkness can ever be counted as complete, for with each conflict committed to the annals of history, a dozen more go unrecorded, there being scant witnesses left behind to tell of the triumphs and tragedies of Traitor and Loyalist alike. As mere mortals, we frame the age in our minds in terms of milestones—Isstvan, Prospero, Calth, Signis, Thramas, Mars, Molech, Yarant, Beta-Garmon, and at last Terra herself. But those of our Order tasked with compiling a more thorough accounting of the age are cursed with the knowledge of a thousand more horrors. In some cases we know the names of every Legionary who fell; in many more we cannot even be certain which Legions were present. Most accounts lie somewhere between these two extremes, and the fate of the mustering world of Bodt is typical in so many ways, and yet thoroughly singular in so many others.

Shadow Wars of the Red Talon

The full role taken by the independent battlegroup under the command of Autek Mor is impossible to collate. Nevertheless, fragmented accounts of dozens of battles are extant in the scattered records of the era. Some list no more than the warlord's name, soon become a byword for destruction behind the Traitor lines, and can therefore be considered apocryphal, while others are more complete, offering a tantalising glimpse into the many shadow wars of this bloody age. One such substantiated account is of the destruction of the Traitor mining world of Saria Major. Here, the *Red Talon* unleashed an orbital bombardment that scoured the hive-refineries from the planet's surface and condemned the surviving population to a slow death in the poisoned aftermath. Viable imagery also places Autek Mor himself at the Battle of Locurtar Station, where his personal forces counter-attacked a Sons of Horus-led company poised at the moment of victory over a holdout Loyalist garrison and routed it. Less certain is Mor's involvement at Kvalgron, where it is known that a powerful fleet ambushed a heavily escorted Traitor-aligned supply convoy heading to the staging grounds at Paramar, capturing or destroying the entire convoy in twelve hours of bitter void warfare. Likewise, the incident at Nashe's World, where a Death Guard extermination detachment was destroyed amidst the cyclopean xenos ruins that towered over the deadly jungles, has often been attributed to Autek Mor but no firm evidence remains extant for this.

The Red Talon

In the middle of 008.M31, the Traitor Legion fief world of Bodt fell under the baleful gaze of an orphaned subject of the betrayed and slain Primarch Ferrus Manus, albeit one whose heritage perhaps bore more in common with the masters of the World Eaters fief world than that of his own sire. That warrior was Autek Mor, Iron-Father of the Morragul Clan of the Legiones Astartes Iron Hands.

Autek Mor was a war leader wrought in the crucible of the earliest battles of the Great Crusade, a Terran-born Legionary of the Xth Legion who had bought the right to command his own clan with the blood of its former lord. Mor was something of an outcast within the Legion and while he bent knee to his Primarch, he was never truly counted as kin to the other Clan-company masters. It was to the ranks of Clan Morragul that those Legionaries whose humours were ill-balanced with those of their brothers were consigned, turning it into a refuge for those who, like Autek Mor himself, could not fully integrate into the Legion and its rigid codes.

As outsiders within the Xth Legion, it should come as no great surprise that Clan Morragul was not counted amongst the force that the Iron Hands Primarch Ferrus Manus chose to stand by his side in the first wave of the assault on the Traitors at Isstvan V. Indeed, Lord Manus reserved that honour for his favoured clan, the Avernii, and thus it was that when the hammer of betrayal descended upon the Iron Hands, Raven Guard and Salamanders, the bulk of the Xth were deployed as orbital reserves, yet to unleash the full fury of their wrath upon the Traitors. Mor's flagship, the *Red Talon*, had yet even to assume its allotted position in the line at the moment of the betrayal. When at last the *Red Talon* arrived at Isstvan V, it came upon a scene from hell itself. The massed warships of the orbital reserve were burning and the vox-net was drowned in bellows of rage and denial. Through it all one fact was repeated over and over, a fact few gave credit to yet which Mor accepted with bitter finality—Ferrus Manus was dead; the father of the Iron Hands had fallen to the blade of his own brother-Primarch.

Though he ordered the *Red Talon* to break through the Traitor fleet that had already sent dozens of Loyalist vessels to their doom, there was nothing that the master of the Morragul Clan could do to avert the massacre being inflicted on the surface or in orbit. At the last, the *Red Talon's* flanks aflame and her armour crawling with Traitor boarding claws, Autek Mor ordered his flagship and any other vessels within range to fight their way clear and to break Warp that they might regroup and perhaps later return to exact vengeance upon the Traitors.

For most of the Loyalists who miraculously broke out of the slaughter at Isstvan V, vengeance would become secondary to simple survival. In time, the so-called Shattered Legions coalesced around the Iron Hands war leader Shadrak Meduson, but Autek Mor would have no truck with his brother-officer's scheme to instigate a guerrilla war intended to bleed the Traitors by a thousand cuts; Autek Mor rejected such ploys as unworthy and beneath him, and instead formulated a strategy of his own. He would gather what forces would rally to his banner and launch a series of full-scale assaults upon worlds that the Traitors had captured or turned, allowing them to expend their strength and then destroying what remained with overwhelming force. He would thus create a firebreak across the void, dividing the sectors that had fallen under the Warmaster's heel from those still loyal to Terra. It was a brutal strategy in which entire populations were to be allowed to fall while the Iron Hands stayed their wrath, yet it was one that made full accounting of the relentless calculus of war. With their force blunted by their invasion operations, the Traitors could be attacked at the moment of their supposed victory whilst at their weakest and obliterated without mercy. There were plenty more worlds that were to fall beneath the Traitors' power with not a drop of blood being spilt, and for these Mor would reserve the greatest measure of his boundless wrath.

From the Deeps

Within a year of the Dropsite Massacre, the greater part of the northern Imperium had fallen to the Traitors. The Loyalist armies were in disarray and prevailing conditions in the Warp had made long range travel and astro-telepathic communications perilous in the extreme. World after world had fallen to the Traitors' inexorable advance on Terra and the Loyalist armies reeled before them, forced into a series of costly fighting withdrawals that at times bordered on a rout. It was from the bloodied void that the *Red*

Talon descended upon the Warmaster's dark empire in a campaign of fire and blade that was the diametric opposite of that being silently waged by the Shattered Legions of Shadrak Meduson, one born of the fearsome mien and bitter anima of Autek Mor.

The Age of Darkness has obscured the true accounting of a great many battles, and those fought along the leading edge of the Warmaster's advance on Terra are especially shrouded. It cannot be said for certain when Autek Mor launched the first strike of his campaign, yet certainly the fate met by Gethsamaine Colonus in the Cyclops Cluster must rank as one of the very first such instances.

Rising from the depths of the Grail Abyss, a ragged yet bellicose flotilla of warships led by the *Red Talon* fell upon Gethsamaine, which had declared for the Warmaster a year earlier. What followed was a brief, yet shockingly brutal assault in which the Iron Hands claimed key Traitor prisoners before destroying the world's major cities in all-consuming nuclear blasts that would render the entire world uninhabitable for generations to come.

Even as the Imperium reeled, Autek Mor began his own war, one fought beyond the sight and the staying hand of the War Council of distant Terra. Gethsamaine Colonus may have been the first Traitor-controlled world to know the judgement of the *Red Talon*, but many more would know it by the end. It has been said of Autek Mor and the force he built around the Morragul Clan-company that he was the last Loyalist out of the Coronid Deeps. In truth, he never abandoned them nor took a single step backwards. Rather, he simply weathered the storm of the Traitors' passing before striking from the rearward, a strategy that, though unacknowledged at the time, is likely to have saved countless Loyalist worlds from the Warmaster's hand.

Autek Mor,
Iron-Father of Clan Morragul

Muster Tredecimmia
The Bloody Proving Ground of the World Eaters Legion

Its capital Tredecimmia, named for the 13th Expeditionary Fleet for which it once served such glorious purpose, the world of Bodt was one of the oldest fief worlds of the XIIth Legion—the savage World Eaters. It was the planet's singular honour to serve as the mustering ground upon which the Primarch Angron was to assume command of his own Legion as well as the numerous auxilia and allied forces of the 13th Expeditionary Fleet, including the largest recorded gathering of the Numen Gun Clans, massed scout maniples of the Legio Audax and numerous other forces drawn from the most bloody-handed of the myriad hosts of Mankind.

When Lord Angron and the massed armies of the 'Bloody' 13th Expeditionary Fleet marched off to make war upon the enemies of humanity, he left behind a world dedicated to maintaining and supplying the age of war to come. Bodt had been transformed from an arid, volcanic world to a planetary mustering ground that was host to entire cities of barracks, extensive subterranean macro silos and continent-spanning weapons testing ranges. Throughout the second century of the Great Crusade, Bodt, and in particular the city of Tredecimmia's muster ground, served as a crucial centre of Legion power and might. Legion aspirants inducted from the worlds conquered by the World Eaters were sent there to begin the implantation and indoctrination process that would see the strongest of their numbers transformed into post-human Legiones Astartes, and the world hosted a large detachment of the XIIth Legion's Apothecarion to that end. The Numen Gun Clans and other cultures from which the auxilia forces attached to the 13th Expeditionary Fleet recruited were likewise mustered and equipped for war at Tredecimmia, and the Legio Audax established a forward base there to serve its scout Titan maniples.

At length, the gun clan auxilias took root upon Bodt in their own right, a large population born of the indentured feral warrior-tribes becoming established in the wastes about Tredecimmia and contributing their own sons and daughters to the musters that fuelled the 'Bloody 13th' as it conquered the void at the leading edge of the Great Crusade. As more World Eaters aspirants were processed at Tredecimmia, the Legion began to recruit directly from the gun clans and in time the practice arose of would-be World Eaters from the gun clans being pitched into battle with those in the latter stages of Legion training. These contests became sprawling battles fought with whetted blade and live ammunition, battles which only the very strongest gun-clanners would survive to be accepted into the ranks of the World Eaters Legion's aspirants. A bitter co-dependence arose between the World Eaters and the waste-dwelling clanners, the two factions bloody rivals who yet relied upon one another for their very existence.

By the close of the second century of the Great Crusade, Bodt was barely recognisable as the planet upon which Lord Angron had taken charge of his Legion, and the same was true of the World Eaters themselves. Always a tectonically unstable planet, the Legion's unleashing of all manner of macro scale weaponry across the surface in relentless, some said reckless, live-fire battle exercises had rent the very crust asunder in places so that it was a rare day indeed when the sub-sonic growl of shifting plates did not roll across the wastes. The shallow seas were turned black and toxic. The arid lands, which were once host to thinly-spread yet stubborn flora and fauna, were by then devoid of almost all life and the planet-wide cadmium sub-strata was exposed to the tortured atmosphere. Only the very strongest of the wasteland-dwelling clanners could survive in the poisoned lands, making the periodic battle-trials their only possible escape and one which few indeed lived long enough to partake in.

Throughout its history, Bodt's primary city, Tredecimmia, proved a vital asset to the XIIth Legion, and as such it was heavily fortified with an extensive network of defence emplacements and subterranean bunkers. The weapons silos used to equip newly inducted aspirants came to house not just conventional armaments, but other weapons and devices the World Eaters had claimed as prizes of war from those they had vanquished during their conquest of the outer dark. Technologies considered too dangerous to exist and proscribed by ancient writ were secreted away in the deepest vaults beneath Tredecimmia, weapons which in all likelihood Terra believed destroyed or had no knowledge of at all.

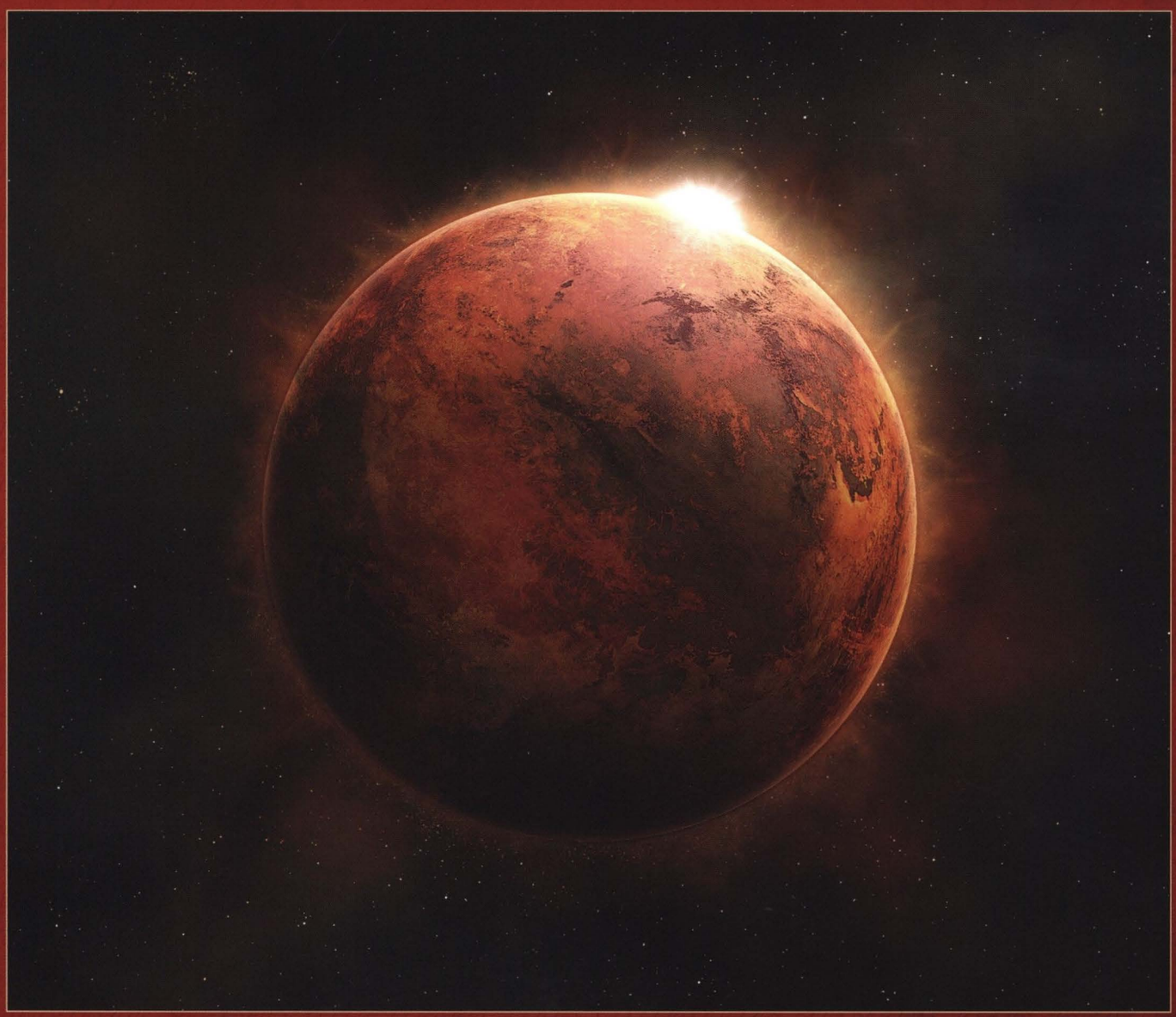
These ancient and forbidden technologies, though ostensibly wards of the XIIth Legion, were to be tended to by a singular order of the priesthood of Mars. It was during the conquest of the Golgothan Wastes that the World Eaters had formed mutual compact with the so-called Crimson Priests of Sarum, a Mechanicum domain Angron had delivered from the predations of the debased stellar empire of the Brotherhood of Ruin. Following their liberation from their ancient rivals, the Crimson Priests had pledged Angron their co-allegiance, some said over and above the fealty they owed to distant Mars. The Crimson Priests went wherever the World Eaters went, and thus it came to pass that the induction-forges and weapons silos of Tredecimmia were tended exclusively by this ill-starred sect and their flesh-bonded Adsecularis Covenants.

Such was the state of the XIIth Legion fief world at the dawn of the great heresy, but it was a state soon to alter once more. In the aftermath of the Isstvan V slaughter, an event that Bodt's masters only learned of after the fact, a delegation of senior World Eaters apothecaries, aided and advised by peers from the Emperor's Children and Word Bearers Legions, arrived there unannounced. They quickly assumed command of the induction facilities and instigated a series of revisions to the Legion's recruitment practices.

It was long established that the XIIth Legion's implantation protocols sat at the extreme end of the spectrum of tolerance and there had been many calls from Terra and from other Legions to rein in these practices, but in the aftermath of the Dropsite Massacre and with the arrival of the new overlord cadre, all restraints were removed. It was said that the raw fuel for the new processes had been harvested from the blood-soaked killing fields of the Urgall Depression, ritually gathered up by the sons of Lorgar and alchemically rendered down by the fell genius of the Emperor's Children. It was to the World Eaters apothecaries that the final duty of implantation would fall, and the result was hideous indeed.

Using the raw material of the gun-clanners, the apothecaries created a new generation of recruits. Where the process of creating a warrior of the Legiones Astartes should ordinarily be painstakingly undertaken over a period of years, this new generation was brought into being in months. The process was shockingly wasteful and while many aspirants simply perished in the bio-vats, many more underwent catastrophic biological destabilisation, necessitating the purging of the implantation chambers by fire and radiation. Those few who survived fell far short of the trans-human ideal the Emperor had intended for the Legiones Astartes. Even for the World Eaters, these were monsters made flesh, their bodies swollen by forbidden processes and their brains flooded with burning autonomic stimulators that, in conjunction with the so-called 'Butcher's Nails' implants standard throughout the Legion, induced a permanent state of hyper-aggression. Furthermore, the flash-indoctrination protocols to which each aspirant was subjected invested him with the stolen memories of a hundred battles and a thousand kills, a flickering montage of other warriors' lives and deaths cycling through their consciousness in eternal loop. From the moment each awoke from the gene-vats, he believed himself a red-handed champion and a veteran of countless wars. His only desire was to shed blood —his enemies' or his own— in the name of his Primarch.

Name: Bodt
Classification: Legiones Astartes Muster/Training World
[Declared Traitoris Perdita by Writ of the Council of Terra Post Isstvan III Atrocity]
System Data: VVC/00325//P/Σ
Stellar Grid: 22-Gal-Cor/U-05
Segmentum: Ultima/Coreward
Notation: Extreme Volcanic, Heavy Toxicity [Cf Exotic Weapons Effects]
++[Fiefdom of the World Eaters Legion]++



The Assault on Tredecimmia

As the war ground on, Autek Mor's force was swelled by other Loyalist factions, including remnants of the Imperial Fists Legion and the Agathon Solar Auxilia who had opposed the Warmaster during the Manachean War. But it was not just allies that Mor amassed as he fought on, but enemies too, for he made a point of taking prisoner key Traitor officers and administrators from each world he struck at. It was from these captives that Mor learned of the status of the nearby World Eaters fief world of Bodt, and his suspicions were confirmed when the Imperial Fists communicated that they had encountered and engaged a number of Traitor Mechanicum conveyance vessels plying the warp-lanes linking Sarum and Bodt.

Mor surmised that the World Eaters subject world was not only intact, but building towards some role in the war that had yet to be fully revealed or realised. This made the fief a high value target indeed, and one which Mor now had a strong enough force to engage. Doing so would be an escalation beyond Mor's existing strategy of allowing a world to fall to a Traitor assault before launching a massive counter-attack, but for several reasons the operation was judged worth undertaking.

Primarily, it was known to the Loyalists that the muster world had once hosted a sizable stockpile of Legiones Astartes war materiel, which, if it was still present, should be denied to the Traitor cause at all costs. Secondly, the records indicated that the planet served as a recruiting world for the XIIth Legion and so might still be host to a large and as yet uncommitted Legion reserve whose neutralisation would serve the Loyalists' war effort well. The presence of the Sarum Mechanicum in the region raised further possibilities, which Autek Mor was unwilling to discuss with his allies openly but which in retrospect must have alerted him to the possibilities of some manner of unsanctioned modification of the Legiones Astartes implantation and indoctrination process. If Mor did indeed suspect this, subsequent events would prove him correct.

Here, records of the assault on the World Eaters fief world become increasingly fragmentary, necessitating a degree of supposition and speculation. Of greater concern than the lack of clarity however is the reason for its arising, which with the benefit of hindsight appears deliberate. It is known that as the fleet of the *Red Talon* was plying the Warp towards its target, the situation to the galactic south and west was growing ever more unstable. Entire fronts were collapsing in the shadow of the Traitors' advance on Terra and what amounted to the Imperium's central command —in reality, a host of lord-magisters scattered across the embattled stars and barely able to communicate with one another, let alone the War Council of Terra— was advocating a massive, inter-sector holding action along a line between Paramar and Chondax. Incomplete transmission logs suggest to some an abortive astro-telepathic communication between one of these lord-magisters and the *Red Talon* fleet, leading to the theory that a representative of the War Council attempted to order Mor's force to

join in with this operation. If such an order was issued, it was certainly not followed. No man with an inkling of Autek Mor's demeanour would have presumed to issue him any such order, for the Iron-Father was known as a dour warrior of especially dark humours upon whose shoulders the authority of others sat ill, even, so it is said, that of his own Primarch.

Whatever the cause and outcome of any communication that may have taken place between Mor and the Terran Council of War, the *Red Talon's* course was unaltered and the Iron-Father's intent unmoved. Twelve days after the fleet's departure from Iod Binary, it translated at Bodt out-system, its vessels arrayed for war and its warriors steeled for a large-scale assault upon a world known to belong to the bloodiest and most savage of the Legiones Astartes.

The Breaking of the Seals

The histories of the age are not party to the planning of the assault on Bodt's primary city of Tredecimmia and such accounts that exist are drawn from myriad sources, no single one possessed of a complete view of the events that followed. Some of the accounts must be judged by us now as questionable in their veracity, while others are fragmentary at best and contradictory at worst. Having discounted the most outlandish of statements, invariably those of mortals whose minds were broken by the overwhelming spectacle that they witnessed at the height of the assault, only a core remains. This kernel of truth must serve as our understanding of Autek Mor's attack, no matter how improbable certain passages may now appear to us so long after the event has been consigned to the histories of the Age of Darkness.

The Burning Moon

Autek Mor's first deed in the assault on Tredecimmia was as symbolic as it was practical. As the *Red Talon* fleet speared towards Bodt it came upon its lone moon, a body possessed of a far-ranging and sharply elliptical orbit. At that point in its transit, the satellite was closing on Bodt, affording Mor a singular opportunity. The Iron-Father ordered that the moon be violently shunted but a fraction of a degree from its course using what remained of the *Red Talon's* stocks of high-yield void ordnance. As a result, instead of passing Bodt at half a million kilometres, the satellite was set upon a course that would strike the planet within hours with apocalyptic force far in excess of any weapon of mass destruction in the *Red Talon's* arsenal. The detonation that marked the altering of the moon's orbit was said to be visible from the surface, the staggering energy release casting a baleful halo about it that, though it was unknown to the witnesses, heralded the doom of an entire planet.

The sight of Bodt's moon transformed into a flaming orb in the night skies is said to have caused the feral gun-clanners who infested the rad wastes to fall to their knees in collective, atavistic terror, an effect it is likely that Autek Mor fully intended. If the world's overlords had ever counted the gun clans as an operational element in any strategy to

defend their world from external assault, the gun-clanners could certainly be counted in such plans no longer. The clanners rose up in primitive fury, driven mad by the burning omen that had appeared in the night skies, and the wastes erupted with gun fire and explosions as they unleashed hell upon one another. Some are even said to have expended their formidable arsenals on firing madly at the burning moon as it swelled in the skies above. The feral gun-clanners were but one faction that Autek Mor had need to subdue. While the World Eaters and their allies would no doubt be thrown into a state of some disarray by the spectacle of the flaming moon, Mor knew that it would take a far greater effort to render them incapable of standing against the next phase of his assault.

This phase began with a precision bombardment of targets across the region surrounding Tredecimmia, unleashed as Mor's fleet split into a dozen assault squadrons. Each barrage was targeted against one of many surface-to-orbit weapons batteries, which, while they were nowhere near as developed as certain key worlds in the Imperium, nonetheless presented a threat to any attacking force. As the assault squadrons closed on their prey, heavy ordnance rained from the skies above Tredecimmia, entire chains of defence emplacements consumed in fire and plasma. It is likely that any mortal defender would have been defeated by the sheer fury of the bombardment, laying the world open to an unopposed planetary landing. But Bodt was defended by no such army of mortals, but by the World Eaters overlord cadre and their Mechanicum Taghmata and Titanicus allies, none of whom were subject to such base frailties.

Though accounts state that Tredecimmia's ground-to-orbit defences were pounded to ash and cinders within the hour, many of its defenders must have been garrisoned in subterranean bunker complexes and protected from bombardment by nigh-impenetrable void shields. Defeating them would therefore only be achieved by a mass planetary landing, and as the attack entered its third hour, the next phase of the operation was set into motion.

The Talon Closes

Pict-captures show that as the doomed moon waxed in the heavens, the night was turned hellish orange by the light of its oncoming death. As if to make the spectacle still more soul-numbingly awful, the descending moon was attended by countless smaller forms falling through the tortured skies ahead of it. It was towards Tredecimmia star port, as well as several other key facilities located in its vicinity, that the bulk of the great landing force is known to have made planetfall.

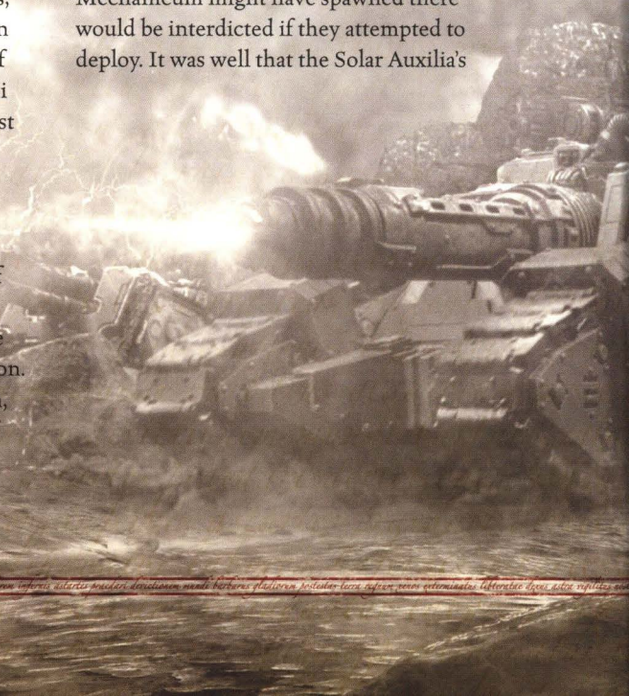
As the massed drop pods descended ahead of the burning moon, those ground defences that had survived the initial bombardment finally opened fire. Halting such a drop was almost certainly impossible, but the sheer weight of fire sent up by the surviving defence batteries took a fearsome toll, especially on those drop pods slowing their descent in the last seconds before touching down, for this was the point of their greatest vulnerability. The wastelands that the attackers had chosen as their drop zones were consumed in fire, shrapnel and las-blast as the defenders reacted with all the firepower at their disposal, yet many of the attackers had been at Isstvan V and such losses must have meant nothing to them. Even if a dozen drop pods crashed and burned, two dozen more set down in their immediate wake, and by the end of the fourth hour of the assault, Iron Hands and Imperial Fists Legionaries were pressing outwards from the burning drop zones, bringing overwhelming fire to bear upon the defenders.

The fury of Mor's ground assault was magnified by a simultaneous sub-orbital strike of staggering proportions. The skies over the black, poisoned sea were filled with squadrons of Xiphon strike fighters ranging ahead of an entire wing of Storm Eagles and Fire Raptors. The first target to know the wrath of the combined strike wing was Tredecimmia's primary defence bastion at the centre of the poisoned sea, which towered above waters turned boiling from the bombardment and whose void shields even the initial orbital strikes had been unable to penetrate. Flying so low the shield domes were rendered all but useless, the strike craft unleashed such a dense rain of high explosive ordnance that no trace of the bastion was left standing and a tsunami was reportedly unleashed upon the furthest reaches of the sea's coast.

Having reduced the central bastion to burning wreckage, the attacking craft turned northwards to support the strike of two further sub-orbital wings closing on a mountaintop defence line identified as the central command point for the entire region. Following in the wake of the bombing run, two Thunderhawk insertion wings, one of Iron Hands squads, the other of Imperial Fists, breached either end of the line so that the warriors disgorged from their assault bays could work their way along and together attack the entrance to the subterranean command bunker. This assault would rage for over an hour as the two forces fought their way along the mountaintop defences through hundreds of enraged defenders. At the last, the Imperial Fists breached the massive blast doors and plunged into the interior, evidently hungry for the honour of attaining their objective ahead of the Iron Hands squads. The effect was to decapitate the Traitors' chain of command and to make possible the final stages of the assault.

To the south of the inner sea, Tredecimmia star port, as well as a number of unidentified Mechanicum facilities further east, came under simultaneous drop pod assault. The star port was attacked by a large Iron Hands force, which drew upon itself a large force of World Eaters whose reported ferocity, even for this most notoriously savage of Legions, was the first evidence of the unsanctioned implantation protocols the Worlds Eaters had been engaged in. The battle for the star port appears to have quickly devolved into bitter hand-to-hand fighting, but the balance was tipped in the attackers' favour when a second wave of Imperial Fists set down upon the port's western flank in order to assault the defenders from the rear. Even thus surrounded however, the World Eaters by all accounts showed no hint of dismay and fought savagely to the very last.

The wastes surrounding the unidentified Mechanicum facility were the scene of the largest single drop conducted during the assault on Tredecimmia, where elements of the 1,522nd Cohort of the Agathon Solar Auxilia established a blocking line so that whatever machine horrors the Traitor Mechanicum might have spawned there would be interdicted if they attempted to deploy. It was well that the Solar Auxilia's



super-heavy tank companies had been deployed in this manner, for even as their Stormhammers and Baneblades assumed position across the wastes, a tide of malevolent machine constructs is known to have exploded from a chain of formerly concealed bunkers. For the next hour, the 1,522nd fought a grinding and costly holding action against myriad Mechanicum constructs, many of which had never before been witnessed but which would become horrifyingly familiar to us in future campaigns. Possessed of outsized combat claws and propelled across the wastes by disturbingly articulated limbs, squadrons of these combat walkers sought to fall upon the super-heavy tanks and rend them apart in a welter of buckled armour. Even when engaged at range, they proved fiendishly difficult to destroy due to some manner of warp shield akin to, and still more effective than the atomantic shielding utilised by Legiones Astartes Dreadnoughts. Though it cost them dozens of super-heavies, the bold Agathonians fought hard to keep the Traitor Mechanicum monstrosities from fatally penetrating their lines and pressing into other zones where the Iron Hands and Imperial Fists were engaged against their erstwhile Legion brethren.

It appears that wherever the Loyalists pressed their assault, waves of defenders flooded out to engage them. The frenzied gun-clanners coalesced into ragged masses across the open wastes and threw themselves at the attackers, seemingly driven beyond madness at the spectacle of the burning moon that waxed ominously overhead. Most were cut down by the massed bolter fire of the advancing Loyalists, but many were so insanely driven to engage the Legionaries that hordes of them had to be scoured from the wastes by flamer-armed Tactical Support squads or simply butchered with combat knives and chain bayonets, which must soon have grown slick with their tainted blood.

With the star port, command bastion and numerous secondary facilities across Tredecimmia either aflame or the scene of heavy fighting, Autek Mor instigated the phase of his plan which, when considered in retrospect, reveals his true intent in attacking the Traitor Legiones Astartes fief world in the manner that he had. That intent would be focused upon the heavily defended macro-provender silos in the north-west sector of the Tredecimmia region.

Assault on the Macro Silos

The assault on the silos is known to have begun in the fifth hour of the operation and represented the greatest moment of risk for the attackers. Archival records suggested that the Legio Audax Titan presence on Bodt was likely to be massed to the north of the silos, but had yet to be located, necessitating the deployment of still more blocking forces to hold any Titan force that should appear at bay. One such interdiction force, consisting of Iron Hands Legion infantry mounted in heavy Mastodon assault transports and supported by mid-weight Mauler battle tanks, was dropped by heavy transporter to the east of the silos, while two more, one of Iron Hands and one Imperial Fists, were dropped still further to the north, beyond the immediate sector of operations. The instant the eastern drop set down, the large force of World Eaters stationed at the silos reacted as Mor must surely have predicted they would, abandoning any pretence at static defence and surging across the wastes to engage the attackers. To the north meanwhile, the other two blocking forces reported only light opposition to their landings, scattered gun-clanners emerging from hidden crags in the blasted wastes to be cut to bloody rags in the rain of bolter fire that would meet them.

With the bulk of the defenders of the macro silos swarming eastwards to give battle to the Iron Hands heavy units deployed there, Autek Mor was then able to commit to the true objective of the entire operation. This phase is known to have been led by the Iron-Father himself, attended by the iron-hard core of the Morragul Clan Company —spearheaded by Autek Mor's elite Gorgon Terminator units, a technology he had personally been able to replicate, even as an exile of war. As all-consuming battle raged across Tredecimmia, a blazing hemisphere of light akin to ball lightning flared into existence upon the wastes to the south of the macro silos. Arcing plasma fused the sands as a mighty phalanx of iron-black Terminators was revealed to have teleported directly to the surface from the *Red Talon's* teleportarium deck, a singular device of the rarest pedigree. Soon, the hulking warriors were bearing down on the western perimeter of the objective, the only defenders that could oppose them the cortex-controlled gun-towers of the Sarum Mechanicum. These defences gave the Iron Hands no pause, and soon the force was pushing through the clustered ordnance silos towards the entrance to the subterranean stasis chambers.

Here, the attackers met an unanticipated mode of resistance and the first of their number fell. The metal flanks of the vast silos reportedly appeared to shift at the Gorgons' approach, jagged, insect-like shapes detaching themselves from the machine-structures and dropping to the ground to land upon spear-tipped mechanical claws. Each machine-sentry bore a weapon of typically fiendish Mechanicum design, from irad-cleansers to lightning guns, which they quickly brought to bear upon the attackers from every quarter. Each a veteran of countless savage battles, the Gorgons pressed onwards through a twisted metal labyrinth crawling with the sentinel-constructs. Every shadow and crevice was lair to some new foe, and so the Gorgons increased their own weight of fire, shredding the structure about them and tearing apart any Mechanicum construct caught in the storm.

At last, Autek Mor stood upon the cusp of his objective. The entrance to the subterranean macro chambers is known to have been protected by blast doors constructed to withstand heavy ordnance, but which resisted the chainfists of the Gorgons for mere seconds. The burning moon looming in the tortured skies, Autek Mor ordered his warriors to form a ring of impenetrable steel about the entrance. With a curt order, he utterly forbade any of his warriors to follow in his wake, no matter what occurred either above or below. With that, he is said to have passed through the breached armoured portal and descended the steps into the stygian vaults below.

Blood shall have Blood

Despite the storm of blood that the Loyalists had unleashed upon the Traitors, they would not go untouched by the hand of death. Across the wastes, the Traitors struck back and the wrath of the World Eaters in particular was a horrifying spectacle to behold. Waves of Legion Inductii —rapidly-indoctrinated aspirants— poured forth from their fortifications to meet the assault, all notions of tactics cast aside in favour of raw ferocity. Where such forces clashed with the Iron Hands and the Imperial Fists, the dusty ground was turned slick with the blood of Traitor and Loyalist alike. What the Inductii lacked in skill and experience, they made up for in strength and savagery, and so while they would eventually be slain, it was only at a high cost in the lives of Loyalist Legionaries.

A Traitor counter-attack came from an entirely unanticipated quarter, its accounting serving as yet more evidence of the crimes of the Warmaster's followers. At one point, the Iron Hands' primary interdiction landing in the north of the Tredecimmia war zone was met with a wave of World Eaters Terminators, later identified as belonging to the so-called Red Butchers. The warriors of this cadre are known for the fact they are so broken in mind that their armour must be kept locked and immobile between battles lest they turn their fury upon their own battle-brethren when no foe is to hand. The Red Butchers who charged across the wastes to engage the Iron Hands were later determined not to be blood-maddened Traitors however, but Legionaries who had fought against the Traitors at Isstvan III and whose minds had been so destroyed by the experience that they no longer knew or cared who they were fighting. A great phalanx of these tragic warriors cut a bloody swathe through the advancing Iron Hands and for a time threatened to push them back to their landing zones. Only the mass deployment of Mastodon heavy assault transports appears to have halted the Red Butchers' counter-advance, their cyclonic melta cannon scouring the wastes and burning the Red Butchers, and in some cases the doomed Iron Hands they were locked in combat against, to ashes.

The Beginning of the End

Now the assault on the World Eaters fief world is known to have entered a new and still more savage phase, heralded by the burning moon as it drew so close that the entire upper atmosphere appeared to have been set alight. The gun-clanners must have understood that their world was ending and they fought with ever more intense savagery, perhaps seeking not to avoid their fate but to embrace it. The ferocity of the mortal wasteland dwellers was as nothing to that of the World Eaters however. Analysis of surviving accounts of these battles, as well as studies of similar instances of rapid indoctrination and implantation carried out elsewhere, suggests that the Legiones Astartes warriors the Iron Hands, Imperial Fists and Agathon Solar Auxilia faced were something utterly devolved from the Emperor's vision for his favoured warriors.

While a core of World Eaters Legion officers was evidently in command of the defences, the bulk of their warriors appeared to have been acting entirely beyond any control. Savage Legionaries clad in mismatched battle plate, by its distinctive features manufactured by the Crimson Brotherhood of Sarum, surged across the rad wastes bearing myriad esoteric short-ranged weaponry that could only have been the product of the fallen magi of Sarum. Such weaponry was unknown to the Loyalists in both form and function, and took a fearsome toll on their ranks. Yet the Iron Hands and Imperial Fists were all veterans of uncountable Compliance campaigns and were able to overcome these short-term losses and press onwards, adapting their tactics to meet this new and novel threat.

Of all the phases of the assault on Tredecimmia, accounts of the events of the sixth hour are by far the most incomplete. It is certain that the fighting reached a climax during this period and that both sides suffered and inflicted a fearsome death toll. The inexorable tide of battle appears to have flowed against the invaders at last, until the whole endeavour hung in the balance. Though the entire world was evidently doomed, the invaders' objective in launching their attack, which had yet to be revealed, might now have failed. Strategio-savants have debated the exact nature of Autek Mor's objective for several years, but the events that followed were to prove that it was of the utmost importance to his long-term aims. So vital was that mission that it was worth the cost in blood and treasure the invaders were paying across Tredecimmia while the Iron-Father was apart from his force in the vaults beneath the macro silos.

Whatever Autek Mor was seeking in the subterranean vaults, his mission was clearly taking too long. As the burning moon waxed so large it now consumed the entire sky, the warriors fighting one another across the surface resigned themselves to their fate and redoubled their efforts to exact what vengeance they could before the end.

As the doom of Bodt grew ever closer to hand, now the balance of death threatened to turn entirely against the Loyalists. A dozen Warhound Titans of Legio Audax charged out of the northern wastes, their vulkan mega-bolters scything down invader and defender alike as they bore down upon the macro silos as if drawn there by Autek Mor's presence. The Titans had evidently bypassed or simply overrun the northern interdiction forces, and all that stood between them and the silos were the massed Gorgon Terminator phalanxes of Clan Morragul. Though possessed of the strongest armour and the most potent weapons, even such warriors as these could not stand for long against this foe. As the mission counter finally ran past the seven hour mark and the burning moon entered its terminal phase, all appeared lost.

The Sundered Seal

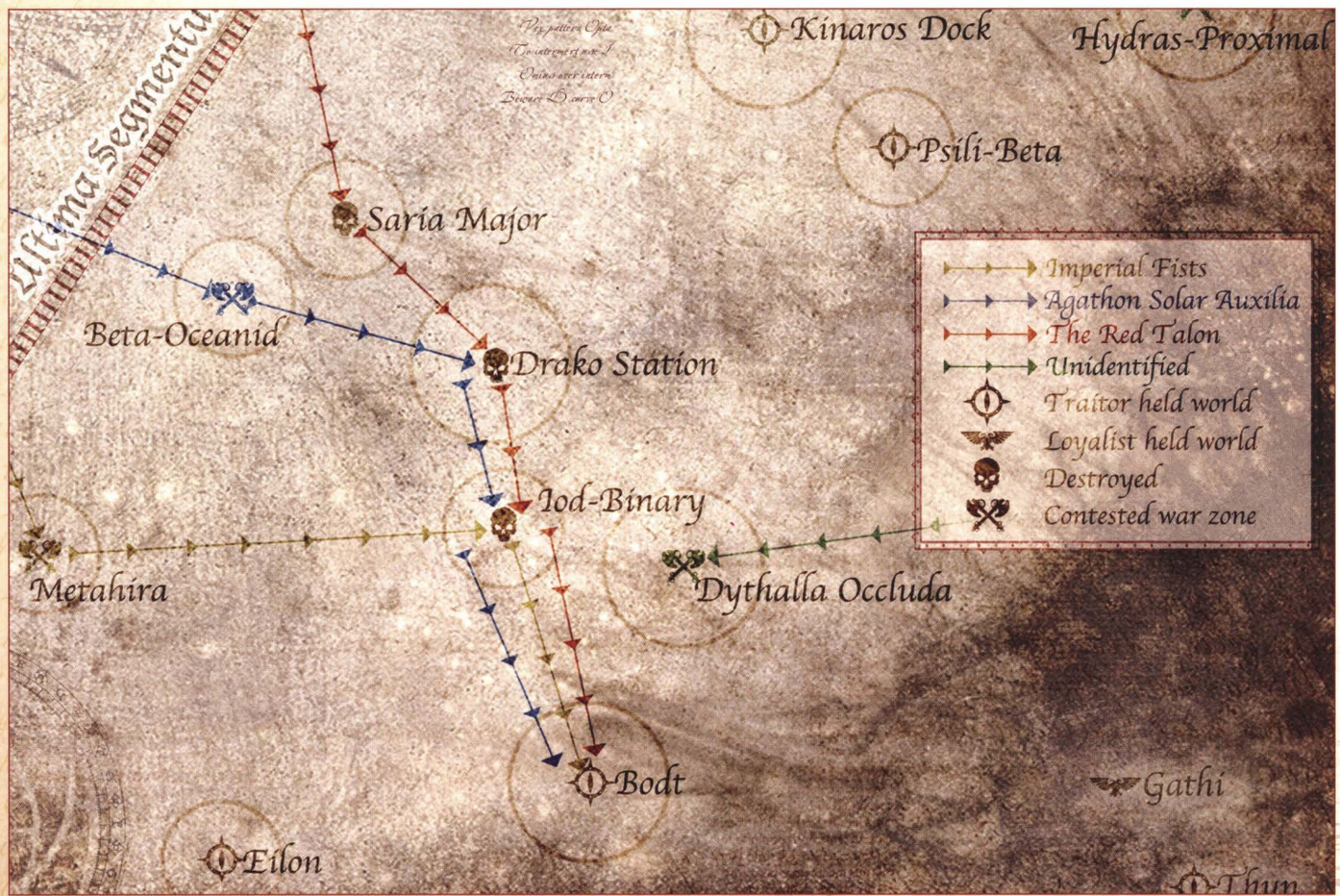
And then, Autek Mor emerged from the macro silos. The Clan-captain's eyes were said to have been "*...alight with dark fire...*" and his hulking Terminator armour was "*...rent and scored as if he had battled a thousand savage foes...*" His demeanour more malevolent than even it was before his descent. In one hand he bore his ancient paragon blade, its edge jagged from scores of nicks, and in the other his volkite charger, its induction coils aglow like red hot coals. It was the object that Autek Mor held in the grip of his back-mounted servo-arm that gave witness to his true mission however – a stasis casket, its flanks etched with the arcane sigils of the inner order of the Emperor's Terran gene-wrights, who under the guidance of the Master of Mankind had brought into being the Primarchs and the entire Legiones Astartes.

Autek Mor is known to have looked upon the destruction unleashed across Tredecimma and spoken a single word of command. It was the order to withdraw and within moments it was being enacted. Mor and his attendant Gorgon Terminator squads were the first to depart, leaving the macro silos a twisted mass of burning wreckage as they fought their way clear to a point from which they could return to the *Red Talon* in the same manner they had arrived. Elsewhere, Iron Hands and Imperial Fists units that had deployed by drop pod hours before fell back to pre-arranged zones where the Storm Eagles and Thunderhawks of the orbital strike wings set down to carry them clear, the Fire Raptors and other gunships circling overhead and unleashing a storm of suppressive fire on the hordes of Traitors attempting to pursue. To the south, the Solar Auxilia forces are known to have fought a disciplined and bold withdrawal back to their own heavy landers, and while in places the frenzied enemy forces overtook them, the greater number were soon being ferried to their vessels in orbit.

In the aftermath of the Loyalists' sudden withdrawal, the Traitors were bereft of foes, with the exception of those few who had been unable to depart and who resolved themselves to a bitterly fought last stand. In moments, the hordes turned their wrath upon their own and the battle lines were redrawn anew. At the last, the gun-clanners and the World Eaters fell upon one another in a seething mass of muscle and blade, shot and flame which consumed Tredecimmia even as the very air itself burned with the heat of the approaching moon. Hair set alight and the very cloth upon their backs igniting, the two factions, who between them had fought so many battles that the best of the gun-clanners might one day join the World Eaters, locked together in the mutual berserker fury of their final moments.

Destroyer of Worlds

Finally, the burning moon struck. The apocalypse was witnessed by thousands of Loyalists as their vessels sped clear, and etched into the data-stacks of countless logic engines. The moon impacted the surface and a tsunami of flaming matter rapidly rushed outwards to encircle the entire globe. The surface buckled as the moon impacted, the greater planetary mass literally swallowing the smaller satellite with horrifyingly slow grace. In moments, the atmosphere was aflame and the already unstable crust was rent open by a thousand fractures, and volcanic eruptions exploded across the entire surface as the mantle below was swelled by the additional mass. By the time the moon was finally consumed not a single living being survived on the surface, the entire population, Traitor Legiones Astartes, Sarum Mechanicum, Legio Titanicus and gun clan alike burned to ashes and cast to the fiery winds.



After the Apocalypse

So much as has been recounted here is known to us, though the accounts from which this record has been compiled are not accepted by all of our Order. Nonetheless, the planet once known as Bodt is now lost to Mankind, its surface a shifting volcanic nightmare that by all estimates will not stabilise within the span of many centuries, and by some estimates may simply ultimately disintegrate, unable to hold its cohesion and torn apart by the forces from within. It is clear from his actions in ordering the world's moon to be sent hurtling into Bodt that this was the outcome that Autek Mor intended, yet a question of still greater import remains unanswered. Why was the infamous Iron-Father prepared to risk the lives of so many of his warriors when in altering the orbit of the moon he had already ensured the death of every Traitor on Bodt?

The answer can only lie with the object that Autek Mor recovered from the stasis vaults far beneath the macro silos of Tredecimmia. Of that descent into the darkness no account is known to exist, and given Mor's infamously grim mien, it is unlikely that any will ever be forthcoming from this survivor of wars uncounted. All we may do is speculate as to the nature of the prize that Mor recovered from the vaults—stasis chambers which after all were suspected to contain myriad technological horrors wrought by the hands of madmen in the depths of Old Night, or conceived of inhuman minds far beyond the light of the Imperium's rule. To some, the fact that Mor's prize bore the sigils of the gene-wrights of Terra is key, and hints at some long-term ambition to transform his Clan-company into something beyond the limits of its creation, how this will tally or conflict with the current processes of change some would impose on the shattered Legiones Astartes is another matter, and one whose speculation is beyond the remit of this discourse. But if history tells us anything in this matter it is that Autek Mor is not a warlord to underestimate, for like the tyrants of Old Night, his true power lies in the terrible secrets he holds, and his willingness to use them, he at whose hand entire worlds have burned.

Historia Terre Regnum

Combatant Forces – The Scouring of Muster Tredecimmia 008.M31

Forces of the Imperium (Loyalist/autonomous) – Combined Planetary Incursion Force of Autek Mor

- **The Iron Hands:** Estimated 5,000+ Legion force, consisting primarily of Morragul Clan-company units with remnant elements of at least three other Clan-companies, and a demi-company of newly initiated Legiones Astartes of the Iron Hands provenance and gene-seed attached. Substantial orbital attack and heavy ground attack elements.
- **The Imperial Fists:** Composite survivor garrison-company of less than 800 Legionaries. Attached sub-orbital assault elements and mobile weapons batteries.
- **Informal 'Shattered Legion' Elements:** Diverse small Legiones Astartes Loyalist elements and sub-groups of various backgrounds and affiliations allied to Mor's faction, approximately 300-400 strong in total.
- **Agathon Solar Auxilia:** Composite sub-cohort. Constituted from remnants of 1,522nd 'Lord Marshal's Own' and several other related units separated from Auxilia command in the aftermath of the Defence of Agathon. Approx 12,000 Solar Auxilia with extensive armoured assault and mobile artillery elements.
- **Command:** Autek Mor, Iron-Father of Clan Morragul. Combined sub-command council headed by Castellan Jhokan of the Imperial Fists and Lord-Colonel Vossen of the 1,522nd Agathon Solar Auxilia.

Forces of the Warmaster (Traitor) – Muster Tredecimmia Defence Forces

- **The World Eaters:** 'Overlord Cadre' of fewer than 100 Legion command and support staff. Estimated 3,500 Legionaries and as many as 11,000 unattested Legion Inductii. Limited armoured support elements.
- **XIIth Legion Auxiliary Echelon:** 12 x high orbit interceptor squadrons.
- **Taghmata Kalika:** Suppression and bio-harvesting force amalgamated from Sarum Mechanicum forces with prior affiliations to Legion Astartes World Eaters. Lacyraemara bio-alchem covenants, 1 x Armoured Brigade (Autokratorii), 3 x Battle-automata Cohorts, 3 x interceptor squadrons. Unknown armoured walker-construct echelon [file redacted].
- **Legio Audax:** Unknown sub-Legio grade force.
- **Numen Gun Clans:** Second generation Expeditionary reserves. Unconfirmed numbers, estimates in excess of 50,000 combatants.
- **Command:** World Eaters Chapter Command under Tribune Karak. Tech-clave of magi of the Crimson Brotherhood of the Sarum Mechanicum. Unknown Legio Audax command element. Numen Gun Clans had no known formal command structure.

+ASSAULT ON TREDECIMMIA+

++PROVENDER MACRO-SILO ASSAULT++

++DATE – CIRCA 720008.M31++

SUB-ORBITAL
ASSAULT
SUB-ORBITAL
ASSAULT
SUB-ORBITAL
STRIKE
INTERDICTION
DEPLOYMENT

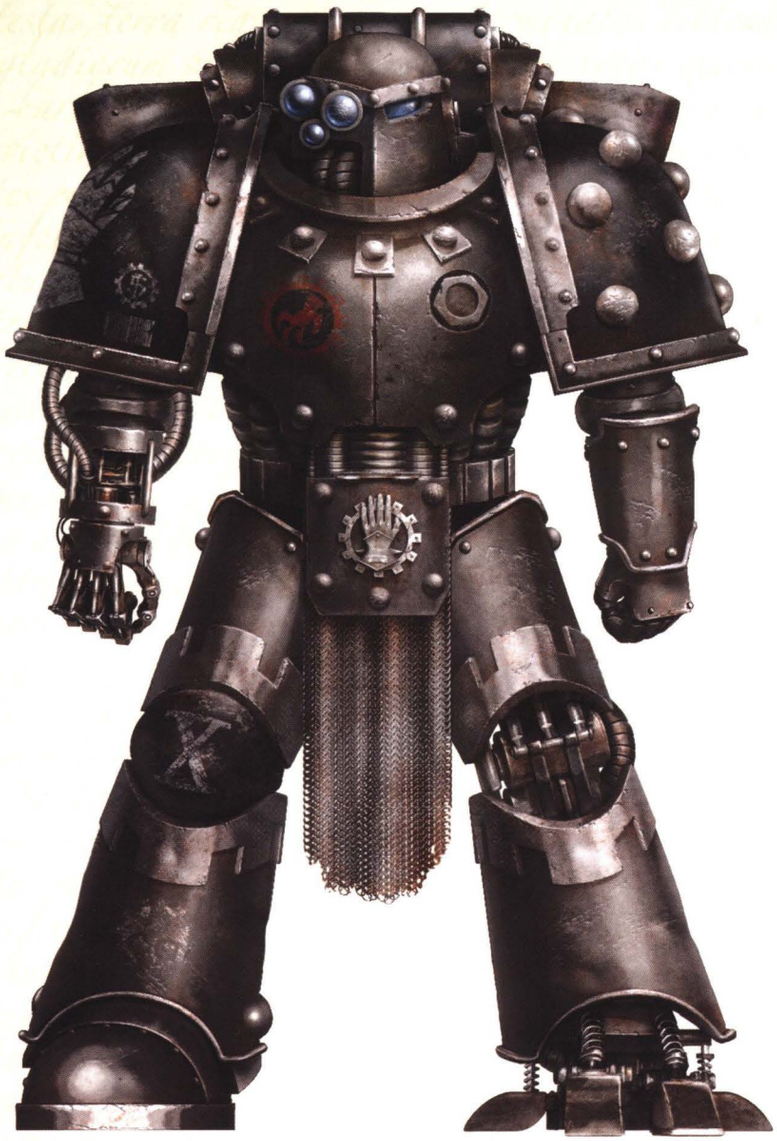
Iron Hands Medusan Immortal

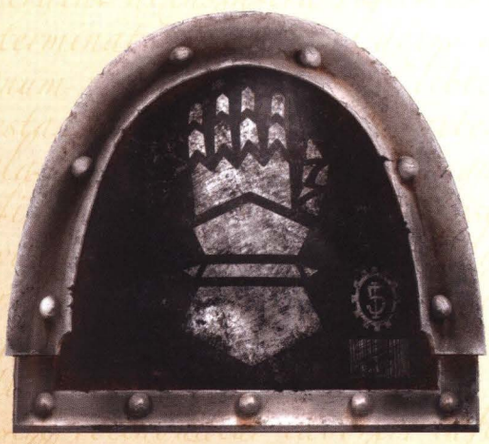
[Legionary Name Redacted]
Morragul Clan-company
Battle of Tredecimmia

The Medusan Immortals were a cadre of warriors within the Iron Hands Legion who having fallen in defeat had been brought back from the brink of death in order to seek redemption in the fires of battle. After Isstvan, the ranks of the Medusan Immortals swelled to unprecedented levels, the Legion having split into a number of disparate elements, their Primarch dead and the Clan-Council slain. Those declared Immortal within the Morragul Clan-company were allowed to fight alongside their brethren, presenting a genuine opportunity to achieve absolution not just in their own eyes, but in those they had failed.

This particular warrior is depicted as he was deployed to the assault on Tredecimmia. The Legionary was committed as part of a heavy assault force carried into battle in the armoured hold of a Mastodon armoured assault transport, its objective to break through the lines held by the World Eaters auxiliary forces south of Tredecimmia to engage the XIIth Legion's forces before they could counter-attack.

Clan Morragul Medusan Immortals
This Legionary displays the heavy cybernetic modification common among Medusan Immortals. The bonding studs on the left shoulder pauldron are a nonstandard feature of Immortal equipment at this stage—one probably initiated by the Techmarines of the Morragul Clan-company and later copied by others. Also of note is the use of the 'red talon' icon of the Morragul—up until this point all Immortals were stripped of Clan-company markings upon induction.





Iron Hands Legion Armourial, 5th Order Designation

Ceramite bonding stud reinforcement, hybrid pattern

World Eaters Assault Legionary

Legionary Balcoth
Task Force Ygethddon
Signus Interdiction

Legionary Balcoth served in Task Force Ygethddon, a mixed Traitor Legion force named for and led by a XVIth Legion Centurion that included units drawn from the Sons of Horus, Night Lords and World Eaters. Its task was to ensure that the Blood Angels Legion did not escape the trap set for it at the Signus Cluster. While the Loyalists were able to avoid the task force's interdiction, several other Loyalist Legiones Astartes forces were less fortunate and were destroyed wholesale by the bloody-handed Traitors.

World Eaters Armour Symbolic Modifications

Balcoth is clad in modified Mark IV Legiones Astartes power armour, the chest pauldron wrought by Legion artificers into a form redolent of the World Eaters icon. The helm's distinctive '*cadaere renissum*' side panels are a throwback to the fighting pits in which the Primarch Angron once fought, signifying a warrior whose sanity had been burned away by lust for battle. Such warriors were regarded as blessed, for they were cleansed of all cares other than war.

World Eaters Mid-Heresy Heraldry

It is notable that Balcoth's armour shows very few of the blue elements once worn proudly by the Legion, most of which have been over-painted blood red or simply been allowed to degrade. In addition, the traditional crossed-chains duelling honour on the left grieve appears to have been neglected in favour of the crudely applied kill-marks scratched into the armour's surface down the right side – yet another indication of the Legion's descent into blood-lust and ill-discipline.

Defaced World Eaters Assault Squad Icon

World Eaters Legion Armourial, Post-Isstvan V Usage

Red Talon Orbital Strike Wing

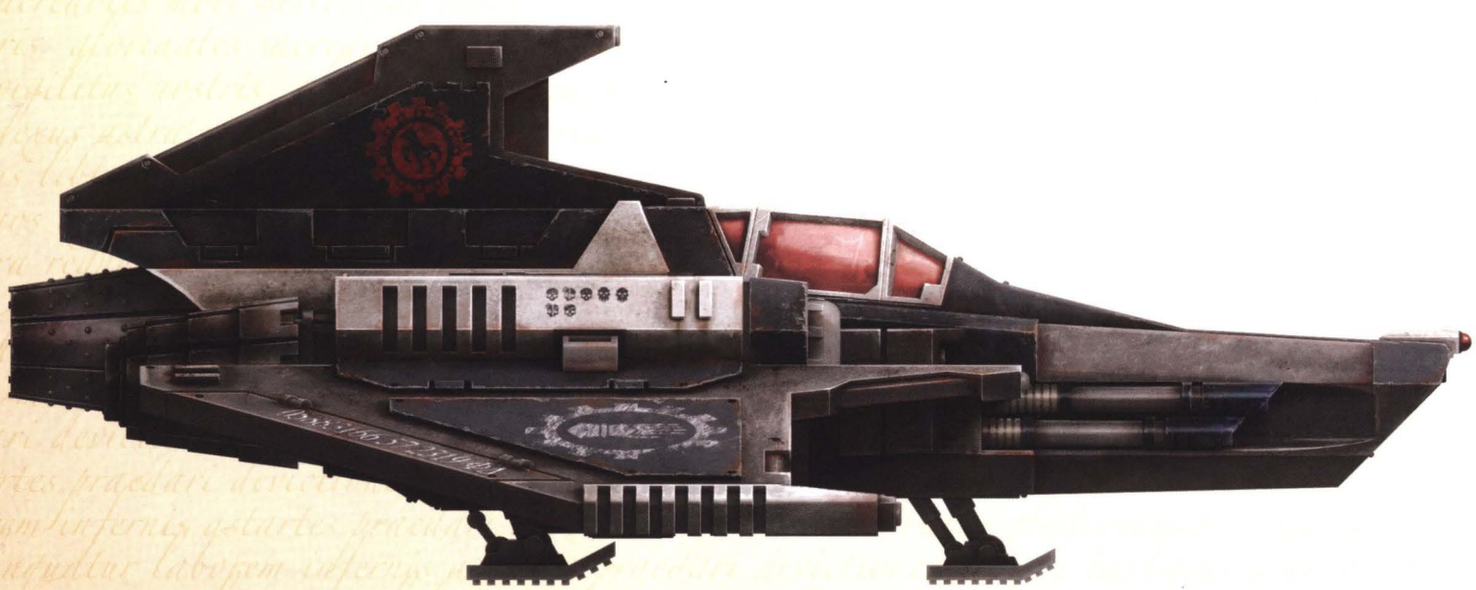
The Iron Hands host that assaulted the World Eaters fief world of Bodt was a conglomeration of units drawn from Autek Mor's own Legion, as well as elements from the Imperial Fists and smaller numbers drawn from several other Legions. With his customary uncompromising demeanour, the Iron-Father melded these elements together into a fearsomely effective force of many different arms, and this is as true of the orbital strike wings as it is the ground units.

Autek Mor's favoured modus operandi was to launch overwhelming planetary assaults using multiple waves of orbital strike craft, heavy orbital bombardment and massed heavy landings delivered by drop pod, landing craft and teleportation array. The orbital strike wings were the first wave of attack, relying on speed and manoeuvrability to engage key enemy installations before they detected the coming attack and raised shield domes or armed ground-to-air and ground-to-orbit defences.

The orbital strike wings were made up of a mixture of craft, the majority of them based on Autek Mor's flagship, the *Red Talon*. Each wing was organised around a squadron of Storm Eagle and Thunderhawk gunships, the troop bays of which had been converted to accommodate additional munitions. This bomber element was escorted by other craft, including Fire Raptor gunships to engage enemy ground units and agile Xiphon interceptors whose primary task was to protect the less manoeuvrable bombers from the attentions of enemy fighters. Of all the highly skilled crews it was said that the Iron Hands pilots were the most adept, utilising their Legion's expertise and familiarity with cybernetic interface protocols to control their craft like an extension of their own bodies.

The *Red Talon* orbital strike wings were used to devastating effect at Bodt, where the first waves neutralised the heavy ground defences that surrounded the World Eaters Legion's garrison installations in and around the city of Tredecimmia. They were instrumental in ensuring large numbers of drop pod-borne assault units were able to deploy to the surface, and continued to engage enemy air and ground units throughout the seven hours of the assault, returning to the *Red Talon* to rearm and refuel several times without rest. At the very height of the attack, every craft able to embark troops was used to evacuate ground units while those not able to do so circled overhead, maintaining such a heavy rate of fire that enemy units attempting to pursue were eviscerated.

Iron Hands Legion Xiphon Interceptor: This craft is marked by its insignia of the veteran Iron Hands pilot Viton Tahn, a Legionary whose skills throughout the later years of the Great Crusade made him something of a legend even to his darkly-humoured peers of the Morragul Clan-company. Following wounds sustained in void battle at Isstvan V, when Tahn attempted in vain to break through the Traitors' orbital blockade, it was thought he would have to be interred within the sarcophagus of a Dreadnought or else perish. Tahn's fellow pilots suggested an unconventional alternative, one which the Apothecarion would only undertake with Autek Mor's personal blessing, which was duly forthcoming. That alternative was to strip Tahn's form of all but the most vital organs and graft what remained into his Xiphon Interceptor. The operation was a success, and Viton Tahn remains the most skilled pilot amongst the *Red Talon's* orbital assault wings.



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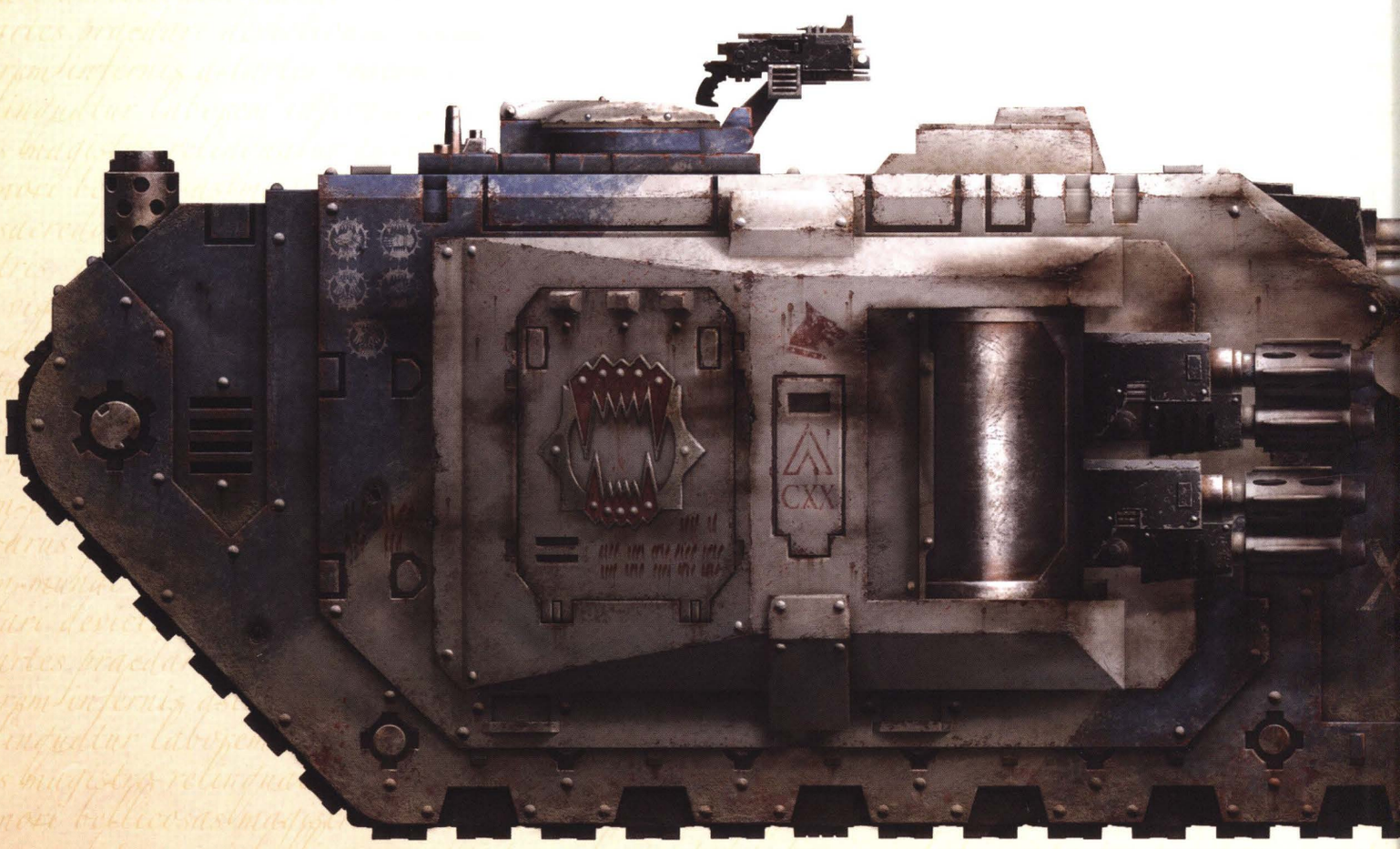
World Eaters Armoured Reserve

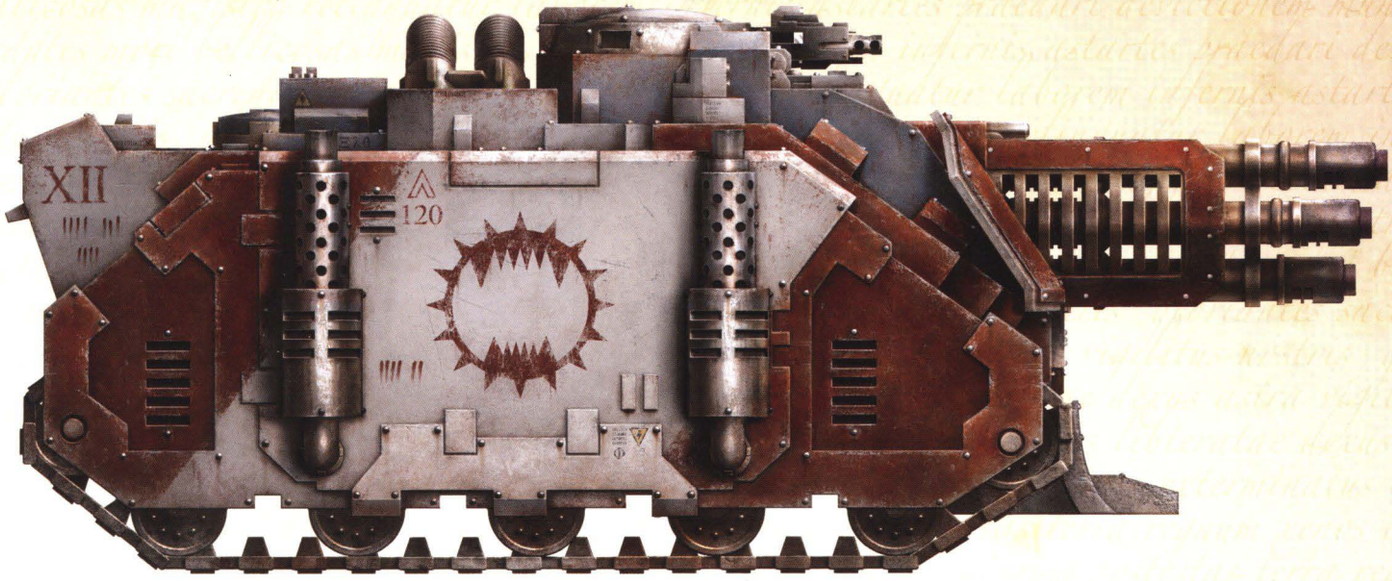
In the aftermath of the XIIth Legion's participation in the great betrayal at the Isstvan System, the World Eaters accelerated their course along a trajectory begun years before, one that would ultimately see their Primarch damned and his Legionaries transformed into debased savages bearing scant resemblance to the champions of humanity the Emperor had intended them to be. As a consequence of this change, the distribution and deployment of certain units within the Legion altered as they fell from use, replaced in the line by other, often more direct, unsubtle and brutal war machines. The World Eaters armoured reserve is an example of this phenomenon and indicative of the shifting tactical doctrines (or perhaps the increasing abandonment of such) prevalent in the Legion throughout the period between Isstvan V and the end of the Shadow Crusade.

As World Eaters battle doctrines became ever more focused on direct infantry assaults, it remained nonetheless crucial to maintain a strong reserve of armoured vehicles that could be mobilised to support such massed assaults. The Legion fief world of Bodt was the base of one such reserve of armoured units, its vast armoured silos host to many hundreds of Legion war machines of every possible class, as well as a cadre of reserve crew-masters able to train new crews and to operate the machines if called upon at short notice to mount a defence of their base, as happened when the city of Tredecimmia was assaulted by the forces of Autek Mor.

The Tredecimmia armoured reserve was host to a range of war machines, the oldest of which had served in the latter days of the Unification Wars and which bore sub-unit icons and battle honours known only to the longest serving of Legion veterans. In contrast, the reserve also contained vehicles which had only recently been entered into the Legion's strength and which as yet bore few if any identifying marks. Even as the Horus Heresy ground onwards and savagery and chaos seized the entire galaxy, the XIIth Legion maintained a constant flow of machines and materiel from such Traitor-aligned Forge Worlds as Sarum and M'Pandex, ensuring that its arsenals were as potent as those of any other Legion.

With the coming of the *Red Talon* to Bodt however, the entire reserve held there was destroyed, even though the crew-master cadre that manned its vehicles mounted a fearsome and determined defence that, though they were doomed, reaped a heavy toll on the Loyalist invaders.





World Eaters Legion Vindicator: This tank destroyer variant of the Legion Vindicator was only just entering service among the Legiones Astartes at the time of Autek Mor's assault of Bodt, quickly finding its way into the arsenals of Loyalist and Traitor alike. This vehicle displays the changing heraldry of the Legion, as the use of blue receded to be replaced with a more bellicose and bloody crimson.

World Eaters Legion Land Raider Achilles: This vehicle was assigned to the World Eaters 120th Armoured Support Phalanx, which was withdrawn from the line and the bulk of its crews converted to assault infantry when its vehicles were dispatched to Bodt in 999.M30. The vehicle bears the icon of the War Hounds on its flank, possibly marking it as ill-favoured in the eyes of the Legion's increasingly unstable Primarch.

World Eaters Red Butchers Terminator

Legionary Zhukel Dror
Battle of Tredecimmia

Once a member of the 8th Assault Company of the World Eaters, Legionary Dror was one of many of his Legion betrayed at Isstvan III. His mortally wounded body was recovered during the aftermath, when it was discovered that he lived yet, albeit so grievously broken in mind he no longer knew friend from foe. Whether as cruel jest, experiment or retrieval of usable biological matter, Dror was shipped to Bodt along with hundreds of similarly wounded Legionaries, where ultimately he was inducted into the ranks of the Red Butchers.

Legionary Dror is depicted here as he and others of the Red Butchers appeared when they were unleashed upon the Loyalists invading Tredecimmia. Accounts of the bloodshed that followed are fragmentary at best, but Dror alone stands accused of slaying at least a dozen Loyalist Legiones Astartes and twice that number of Solar Auxilia before he was crushed beneath the armoured tread of a Mastodon armoured assault transport of the Iron Hands Legion.

Armour of the Red Butchers

The distinctive Terminator armour of the Red Butchers functions as a prison inbetween battles, when it is remotely locked and rendered immobile by Legion overseers. It is notable that the original blue heraldic elements are being supplanted by red markings, much of which is simply the blood of the Legion's foes.

Sarum Pattern Modified Shoulder Guard

Mechanicum Thallax

Kalika Covenant, Taghmata Sarum Bio-reclamation Cohort,
Scouring of Tredecimmia

Sarum Mechanicum Thallax Aleph-Nun-833: This Thallax belonged to the Mechanicum force assigned to Bodt under the binding compact pledged between the World Eaters and the so-called Crimson Brotherhood of the Forge World of Sarum. Its primary role was to serve in a bio-harvesting cohort under the supervision of a Sarum Tech-Priest of the Lacyraemara, tasked with scouring the wastelands of Bodt of undesirable lifeforms, in particular outcast gun-clanners afflicted by sickness or the stigmata of mutation, and recover their remains for reconstitution into Adsecularis Tech-thralls. Its final duty, alongside several hundred other Thallax, was to oppose the coming of Autek Mor to Bodt, a task it was destroyed attempting to fulfil.

The Scouring of the Nostramo Sector

"When you collar a feral beast, you teach it nothing save patience. Its savage nature is unchanged, merely held in abeyance while the grip of its master remains strong. But should the collar slip and the beast come loose..."

Attr. Konrad Curze, the Night Haunter, on the nature of the Legiones Astartes.

At Empire's End

'A day will come when sacred Ilium shall perish, when Praiem King and all his people shall be slain.'

Attr. to the Helac warlord Skypio Aemilanos

In 017.M31, hosts of the Emperor swept outwards from Terra in vengeful pursuit of the Warmaster's broken hordes, the first loyal fleets reaching the north-eastern fringes of the galaxy, long a stronghold of Legions sworn to the cause of Horus. Composed largely of squadrons from Baal, Ultramar and other Loyalist enclaves, these outriders of what later chronicles would come to call the Scouring, were eager to inflict on the fleeing Traitors the same humiliation they had suffered themselves in the early years of the Horus Heresy. The armada bore a full panoply of those weapons once forbidden from use, rad-phages and virus weaponry of terrible potency, as well as numerous battalions of Legiones Astartes warriors, all honed by the fires of heresy and war to the pinnacle of human skill-at-arms. Such measures were considered barely adequate for dislodging entrenched Night Lords battalions, the VIIIth Legion having had nearly a decade to fortify their domain and no hope of clemency from their brethren in the wake of the Siege of Terra to blunt their determination.

Yet despite all intelligence to the contrary, no determined resistance was to be encountered by these fleets. Of the VIIIth Legion only scattered and isolated warbands were discovered, and none larger than a reinforced company. While these forces fought with all the vicious spite and skill that was to be expected of the Night Haunter's sons, each fought and died alone and unsupported, little more than irritations to the gathered might of the Loyalist armada. Of the great armies they had expected to meet, the fleet's scouts found only ruined fortresses and the battle-scarred wrecks of VIIIth Legion void craft drifting in space, broken by some unknown force that had taken the Night Lords by surprise and left them dead in its wake.

Faced with a worrying enigma, and the possibility of some grand deception on the part of the Night Lords, the lords of the fleet withdrew the bulk of their forces to the remote fleet anchorage at Caith Laes. Those forces anticipated in and around the Nostramo sector composed perhaps a third of the expected remaining strength of the VIIIth Legion, and the command officers of the fleet were wary of allowing their forces to be caught in ambush by the Night Lords, long since renowned as masters of such tactics. Instead, an extensive survey of the sector was made by the fleet's scout elements, a search that would last nearly six months and uncovered no hidden warriors or secret fastnesses, only more mysteries. With no immediate military threat and the desire for vengeance still strong within the Loyalist warriors, the fleet departed the Nostramo sector, en route to distant battle zones where Horus' legions still fought. The final fate of some 30,000 of the Night Haunter's sons was of little import in those fleeting days of optimism and victory, and it is only now, as the enemies of Mankind slowly devour all that was built in our Great Crusade and we seek for all advantages that we may, that questions are asked.

Many have attempted to solve the riddle of the Nostramo sector, and few have arrived at the same conclusions. Collected here are some of the most revealing treatise from within the sealed archives of great Terra, each based on the fragmentary information that has been recovered from that area of space. Perhaps from the distilled wisdom of these accounts an answer can be divined for the question that still haunts the Divisio Militaris: what scoured clean the entire Nostramo sector in the dark years of the Horus Heresy?

This report and those that follow it are but a few of many billions of censored documents sealed within the great archives of Terra. Much information from the dark days of the Horus Heresy and the earliest days of the Scouring that followed has been hidden away and allowed to fade from the sight of history, yet in such forgotten scraps can be found glimpses of the true fate of the Nostramo sector. There has been some resistance to its printing as part of this document, but for now the needs of the Divisio Militaris inquiry have superseded the policy of erasing history that has occupied some sects within the Archivists Colleges.

This first fragment dates from the arrival of the first of the Retribution fleets, the initial wave of the Scouring that pursued the retreating hosts of Horus across the galaxy. In addition, I have appended some additional information from more standard archival sources for purposes of clarification. While the focus of the Legiones Astartes in this instance was not the same as the inquiry we have posed, the facts uncovered are intriguing in their ramifications.

Night Lords Veteran Legionary

Executioner Endros Shek
Desperation Pacification Detachment
9th Terror Company, 18th Chapter

The VIIIth Legion had always been known for its excesses; as renowned for the massacres it left in its wake as for the victories it brought the vast armies of the Great Crusade. Yet by 011.M31 they had cast off the last semblance of rational military logic, and where once the slaughters, culling pits and flaying of the defeated had been considered part of a greater military strategy, a blood-spattered means to a more noble end, they had become an end unto themselves. Lost in an endless nightmare of blood and death, the Night Lords Legion echoed the descent of their lord into madness and abomination.

This pict recording, salvaged from the ruins of the hive world of Desperation by the XIIIth Legion in the wake of their assault, depicts Endros Shek, whose infamous Terror units were amongst those Night Lords forces who participated in the Culling of Desperation. In the hours before the Ultramarines made planetfall, the Night Lords of Shek's detachment set to the slaughter of the population of Desperation, preferring to render those they could not control into gore-spattered fetishes rather than allow them to fall into the hands of the enemy. By the time the first of the azure-blue landing craft of the XIIIth Legion touched down on Desperation, the hive towers were draped in the shorn skins of their inhabitants, and the midnight heraldry of the Night Lords was obscured by a glistening sheen of arterial red.

The Bloody Hand Insignia of the Night Lords Terror Battalions.

Baroque Night Lords Legion insignia, intended for use by veteran elements of the Legion.

++Carta Segmenta++
++Tributis: Nostramo [Revoked]++
++863Y 477X56++
++Optio Limites++
++Viewing++
++ Classification
Cross referencing all worlds of the Nostramo Sector with the following keywords:
+Destroyed
+Xenos Infestation
+Unknown Aggressor
+Zone Perditus
++Standard time reference: 010-017.M31
++Display redacted data...
++Enter access cypher:
++Stand by ++
++Displaying all data...
The Storm's Jaws
Ruins of Nostramo
++Destroyed, 984.M30. Moon Tenebor destroyed 010/011.M31++
Cairn
Segmentum Tempestus Border
The Nostramo Sector
Hale
Nethersken
++Lehrove infestation, 011.M31++
The Dominion of Storms
Gulgorahd
The Gulgorahd Protectorate
Garguur
Memlock

All data sealed, by order of High Lords of Terra.
-Destroyed, 012.M31++
The Aether Reefs
Ulan Hûda
The Hûda Gulf
Kalleth
++Destroyed, 011.M31.
Claimed as resources despoiled by
the Blood Angels in
017.M31.++
Kruun
++Destroyed, 012.M31++
Desperation
++Destroyed, 011.M31++
The Thramas
Sector
Thramas
++Zone declared Perditas,
009.M31 by order of
Lion El'Johnson.++
Yaelis
Sheol

Shadows of the Past

++ IXth Legion (Cognomen: The Blood Angels)
++ Field Report, Decahelion-34458.663/Lambda
++ 8-675-017.M31
++ Battlefleet Vengeance, Nostramo Sector
++ Consul-Vigilator Sargan Varsaris, 33rd Company, 9th Chapter
++ Investigation of the Tenebor Facility Wreckage
++ Deployment Analysis

Upon entering the Nostramo System, 33rd Company Command was notified that no active Night Lords combat units had been detected in-system, allowing no opportunity for further vengeance in Lord Sanguinius' name. The only contacts on our augur readouts were long-dead ship hulks and the remains of the fortress-moon Tenebor, all of which read negative for power or targeting-auspex emissions. The 33rd Company was returned to standby from active alert, with response sections remaining at combat readiness in case of hidden hostiles. As acting commander of the response sections in the wake of Praetor Kaelon's death at Sothis, yet more of our best lost to the Traitors, it fell to me to lead recon elements in a sweep of Tenebor. We were issued three directives by interim chapter command: determine if Tenebor remained under hostile control; gather any intelligence on enemy disposition or strength in the Nostramo sector; and mark any usable supplies and munitions for later recovery. In case of contact with determined resistance we were under orders to fall back, alert the fleet and hold a beachhead position until reinforced.

The Fortress-moon of Tenebor

Last remnant of Nostramo, Tenebor was spared the Night Haunter's wrath when he returned to purge the sin of his people. The moon itself had long been given over to the keeping of the VIIIth Legion, remade into a fortress that had been intended to stand guard over Kurze's adopted world and to serve as home for those of the Legion stationed there. Carved into the dense, heavy element-laced fabric of the moon itself, Tenebor was a formidable redoubt; large enough to accommodate nearly half the Legion and bearing armament far in excess of any capital ship, save perhaps the legendary *Phalanx* of Inwit.

However, mirroring the decline of the Legion that had created it, by 007.M31 Tenebor was but a shadow of its former self. Its last recorded garrison numbered less than 3,000 of the VIIIth Legion and much of its infrastructure had been allowed to fall into disrepair. Of the mighty guns that had once warded Nostramo from xenos raids and the other terrors of Old Night, but a fraction remained operational, and few trained Legion thralls remained to serve their masters in times of war.

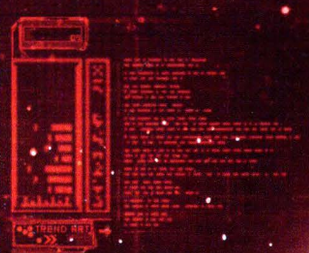
Despite these facts, the commanders of the Retribution fleets of that age had expected to find a reinforced and fortified battle station; indeed Nostramo had been set as the first strategic objective for the fleets due to the expected level of resistance. The discovery of its lifeless and gutted corpse was the first indication of the unknown misfortune that had descended on the Nostramo sector, a mystery that was seen as being of secondary importance while the final battles against the forces of the fallen Warmaster still raged.

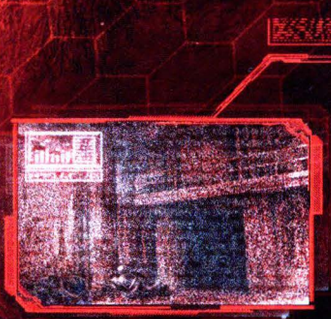
Primary Objective: Target Infiltration and Reconnaissance

The ceremonies of armament and dedication proceeded without incident, and all Oaths of Moment were duly recorded and witnessed before the task force departed. Eight reconnaissance squads, deployed by Storm Eagle gunships, were inserted into the wreckage of the fortress-moon, and as its structural and atmospheric integrity could not be verified externally, all Legionaries were equipped with void hardened battle plate as per standard Zone Mortalis engagement protocols. We entered the station through the emergency airlocks at the furthest bastions of the fortress, hoping to avoid any active defences around the main hangar bays. While the airlock itself proved both undamaged and easily bypassed, we soon encountered damage within the station itself. Much of the damage is easily attributed to small arms fire, with some unmistakably that of Legiones Astartes pattern bolt weaponry as well as smaller calibre ballistic and energy weaponry. Some of the energy scars we discovered were initially unknown to me, however Sergeant Antonis of 4th Squad, a Terran veteran of the Legion, noted their similarity to those of the earliest patterns of the Martian volkite weaponry issued to the Legions at the beginning of the Great Crusade. Such weapons have not been issued in numbers great enough to account for the blast marks we observed in over a century; indeed, amongst the 9th Chapter we retain no such weapons in active service, and as such it is unlikely they were employed by the Night Lords who defended the station.

Leaving one squad to secure the airlock, we moved to survey the station proper. Access corridors throughout the areas we entered were littered with debris, some of which had obviously been arranged to provide makeshift firing positions. A number of these had been placed in positions suggesting the defenders had been under assault from a number of directions rather than a simple frontal attack, a complex undertaking, but a favoured tactic for a number of Legions, most notably the XVIth and XIXth Legions. We also discovered a number of corpses, all of which were either Legiones Astartes of the Night Lords or their chattel; the attacking force must have removed all of their own fallen. Of these Night Lords two facts were readily apparent: firstly, due to the state of the bodies, this conflict had been conducted long before our arrival, possibly a decade or more ago, and secondly, each Night Lords corpse we encountered had its progenoid glands removed, most likely by the attacking force.

Upon reaching the main hangar bays we discovered by far the greatest concentration of the dead, in this case several hundred auxilia and a lesser number of Night Lords. The auxilia corpses, left lying where they fell, appear to have been slain as they fled, many having cast aside their weapons and showing cavernous bolter shell wounds in their backs. Damage to the main hangar from las cutters and melta bombs would indicate this was the point by which the attacking force entered Tenebor, and the placement and sheer volume of blast marks around the point of entry suggest fierce resistance from the defenders. The hangar bays and adjoining storage vaults had been stripped clean of salvageable materials long before our arrival. So thorough was the salvage operation that it must have taken a significant length of time, suggesting that whatever force had captured Tenebor feared no immediate counter-attack from the Night Lords.





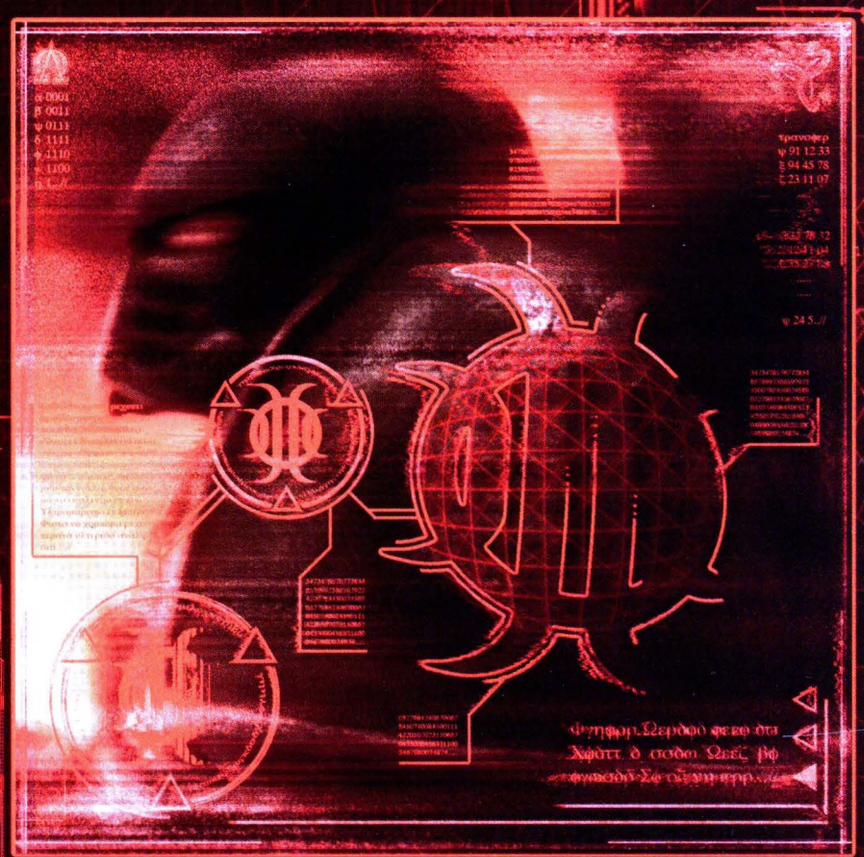
+++ Secondary Objective: Data Acquisition

Our final target was the command spire of the station and the cogitator banks housed within. Again, this area showed extensive signs of combat, with a large number of Night Lords remains to be found in the access junctions before the main command halls. This appears to have been where the garrison made its final stand, with a number of corpses being found within the halls as though they had been dragged from the fighting to be treated or to allow fresh troops into action. This would suggest a protracted struggle for control of this area, with the Night Lords defenders fighting to the last. Past the main entry portals we found little evidence of further fighting, save at the centre of the spire where the headless corpse of a Night Lords praetor was discovered. The lack of collateral damage in the surrounding area and the nature of the fatal wound, as well as the singular nature of the body, suggest an honour duel was conducted that resulted in the death of the praetor, and that his head was claimed as a trophy by the victor.

The cogitator banks showed some signs of forced access, however a quantity of data was still accessible. As ordered, a search was conducted for information relating to Night Lords' dispositions in the sector and the identity of the attacking force. Information on Night Lords positions was retrieved, though all nearly a decade old, and oddly the station's records marked many of these positions as hostile, perhaps indicating internal strife within the VIIIth Legion at that time. This information also bore tell-tale signs of having been accessed without the correct access ciphers, again presumably by the force that overtook and sacked the station.

+++ Commanding Officer's Remarks

Of the station's attackers all that could be retrieved were several grainy pict-captures; these images clearly identified the attacking force as Legiones Astartes bearing an unknown heraldry of red and black, their sigil not known to us. Judging from the images retrieved and from the evidence of our survey, the attacking force must have numbered at multi-company strength, including a detachment of Cataphractii and specialist boarding and infiltration troops. Those images we recovered all show older marks of battle plate, mostly Mark II and Mark III, but with significant levels of non-standard alterations. This force engaged and destroyed the defending garrison, well over 1,000 auxiliary troops and some 300 Night Lords, before disappearing. We could find no information on where this force went or its current loyalty, and must classify it as a potential hazard to the fleet, despite its attack on a known Traitor Legion.



ACROSS ASHEN TRAILS

Of those worlds within the Nostramo sector known to have been inhabited prior to the outbreak of the Horus Heresy and the subsequent loss of contact, only two retained any viable population by 017.M31. The rest lay in ruins. Some of these worlds were found to have been obliterated or infested by hostile xenos breeds, while others appear to have destroyed themselves in brutal internal civil strife, both between those of Loyal or Traitor sympathies and between factions of the VIIIth Legion itself. However, some of these previously bountiful worlds were sacked and left barren by an unknown force of Legiones Astartes warriors bearing many similarities to those who struck Tenebor.

The following pict-record is from the personal logs of the Rogue Trader Erasmus Skathe, and is excerpted from the voyage his ship, the *Invidious Glory*, made through the Nostramo sector in the early years of the first century of the 31st Millennium. It deals with an expedition to the ruins of Hive World Cairn which, in the years before Horus tore the galaxy apart, was a hive world of untold billions and origin of much of the Nostramo sector's riches. While Rogue Trader Skathe found none of the wealth he sought, what he did uncover speaks of the character and origins of the unknown enemy who struck the sector.

Log File 8446/014/Nostramo, as Dictated by Rogue Trader Erasmus Skathe, Master of the Invidious Glory, to his Servant, the Faithful Cadmus Rahn, in 020.M31:

LOG FILE 944-ALPHA

Thanks to star charts set down to aid the Great Crusade, and the fitful graspings of our Navigator, we arrived in orbit of the world once known to the Imperium as Cairn. Described in the old records of the Great Crusade as an enclave of technology and reason among dark and squalid stars, Cairn was a towering bastion of industry whose creations brought untold wealth into the coffers of the lords of Nostramo before the Night Haunter brought destruction upon that world. Here, where the servants of the undying Emperor had reported only ruins and silence at the end of the Horus Heresy, we had hoped to find a treasure of salvage; a wealth in stored resources perhaps, or storehouses of arms and munitions still waiting to be claimed by the warriors of the Horus Heresy, maybe even that most sought after of treasures, the encoded secrets of a lost STC template.

LOG FILE 946-ALPHA

From orbit the appearance of the once great world dampened our enthusiasm, for whatever disaster had overtaken Cairn had rendered the towering hives into little more than blasted rubble. Our only consolation was that the sub-surface levels of the old hive cities appeared to be intact, sealed closed by the rubble above them and likely kept safe from scavengers. Intending to explore these artificial caverns, we set down a shore party by arvus lander; twenty-three of the ship's armsmen, many of whom were veterans of Solar Auxilia pattern regiments of the Imperial Army, myself, and such of the ship's engineering crew that had been initiated far enough into the mysteries of the Machine Cult that they could identify any items of true value.

LOG FILE 947-ALPHA

We made our second foray into the artificial caverns beneath Cairn, with tech-adepts moving in the wake of the armoured auxilia and utilising powerful but temperamental lumen-caster arrays to ward off the smothering darkness and to catalogue any potential finds. What we found within those caverns haunts me to this day: charnel pits that stretched beyond what light our equipment could cast, the squalid and hideous detritus of the cannibalistic nightmare that had consumed the survivors of Cairn. Every chamber and passage held the macabre remains of those dragged down by what had once been fellow citizens, and in the shadows about us, those who remained and the terrible progeny they had begot lurked and waited to feast upon us. Some units of Solar Auxilia were lost in that bleak realm, when their lumen-casters failed and the inhabitants of this shadowed realm overwhelmed them; of these souls we found little but bloody bones and torn fragments of their armour, the wounded dragged away as stock for their gruesome larders. Whatever humanity had once existed in these creatures, it had long since been extinguished by more than a decade trapped in the black pits beneath Cairn, forgotten by an empire consumed in civil war and never to return.

LOG FILE 946-BETA

Breaching the rubble that sat atop the lower levels like a shield proved more difficult than we initially imagined; it almost appeared as though someone had purposefully demolished the hive above so that it would form a formidable barrier to either entering or leaving the lower levels. We were forced to utilise specialist breaching tools in order to force entry, but could excavate only a small entrance lest we collapse the unstable layer of rubble above us. Within minutes of forcing a path into the hidden vaults below Cairn, we were attacked by a wave of stinking, hollow-eyed, emaciated creatures that we initially thought some debased xenos breed.

They came as a terrifying silent horde, scrabbling from the opening we had torn in the rubble, blinded by the weak light of Cairn's distant sun. The engineering adepts that had manned the cutting equipment were swiftly pulled down by the wretches and even our outlying sentries, veteran soldiers armed with modern lasrifles, fell prey to the numberless swarm. The creatures were only driven back at length by the disciplined fire of our armsmen, who retreated from the entrance way to form a firing line on more open ground, abandoning some few of our party to save the greater proportion. In this brief engagement, though we were to emerge triumphant, much of our limited supplies of ammunition were exhausted. In the wake of the attack, we determined that the creatures that assaulted us were in fact human, the remains perhaps of the original inhabitants, ruined and broken by life in the rad-soaked darkness of the ruins beneath Cairn. Rather than risk our depleted numbers in the pitch-black warrens beneath Cairn, I elected to bring down reinforcements from orbit, having fortunately bartered the considerable authority of my Writ of Trade for the services of the depleted 83rd Memlok Cohort of Solar Auxilia, who had previously been stationed at Gulgorahd for refit.

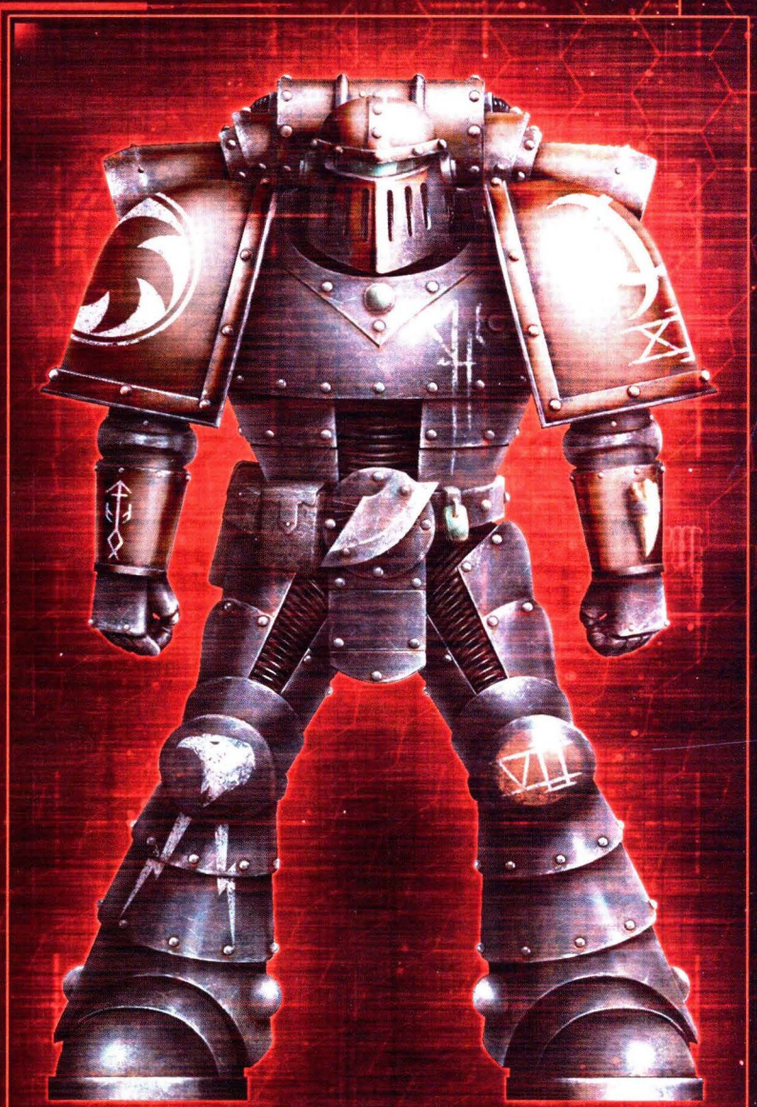
Log File 947-Beta

As we scoured this lightless hell we discovered artefacts of Cairn's fall, but these were not the valuable tech-salvage I had hoped to procure. Instead they were the remains of Cairn's executioners: bolt shells and fragments of Legiones Astartes battle plate in a black and red heraldry that was unknown to me. The doom that had befallen the world had come at the hands of Legiones Astartes other than the Night Lords. Further artefacts of this distant catastrophe were uncovered by our tech-adepts as we cleared the lower caverns, most often items of Legiones Astartes' wargear rendered non-functional by damage and discarded, all in the same unknown heraldry pattern. Within the deepest vaults of the fallen hive we finally uncovered the remaining data archives, stored within a vast cogitator matrix of truly ancient design that had, to our great dismay, suffered extensive damage. It seemed that the deformed survivors of Cairn's fall had long since destroyed the caretaker automata that had once tended the data-engines, perhaps intending to silence the great machines themselves, and now nested in that complex in large numbers.

All our tech-adepts were able to coax from the machine's depths over the course of several fraught days of interminable invocations and ritual, the Solar Auxilia vigilant all the while to the ever-present threat of the creatures that dwelt in the depths of Cairn, were a series of recordings and data entries. While these provided little in the way of technical information, they did give a disturbing insight into the final days of Cairn. This world, it seemed, had not been merely destroyed, but rendered into a warning for other systems in the sector; its armies utterly annihilated and its population herded into the depths of its hive cities before they were collapsed and sealed, the price of their defiance. These tactics match well the descriptions of the Dark Compliance inflicted by the Sons of Horus on a number of worlds during the Horus Heresy, yet Cairn was already sworn in service to the Warmaster's cause through their Night Lords masters and would seem an unlikely target for such terror tactics.

Log File 948-Alpha

Clearly shown in a number of pict images are Legiones Astartes warriors, each outfitted in baroque variations of the older Mark II battle plate once common during the Great Crusade. The heraldry in use by these warriors is unlike any I have seen before, a deep black with the pauldron and helms daubed in a dull red. Many of the Mark II armour's segmented plates have symbols inscribed on them, not in a regimented pattern that would indicate marks of rank or status, but almost at random and in the form of primitive tribal runes or gang symbols like those once worn by the Sons of Horus. Many also bear the raptor and lightning bolt symbols of the Emperor, an honour usually reserved only for those Terran recruits who fought by His side on the battlefields of Ancient Terra and the other worlds of that system, and often considered a sign of Loyalist allegiance. Trophies of fallen enemies, in the form of fragments of weapons, and skulls and claws of xenos beasts adorn the warriors, many in forms I have never witnessed before, and I have seen much that few others have borne witness to in my travels, and small charms on carved green stone, similar perhaps to Terran jade. Most notably, each warrior displays a strange sigil upon the pauldron that would normally boast the symbol of one of the Legions, a circle ringed by jagged claws, ash-white on a field of red that matches the colour of dried blood, an ominous and sinister emblem.



Log File 950-Alpha

Whatever their loyalty, it was these warriors who plundered Cairn, for the information contained within the archives details a number of STC templates, construction matrices and other technological treasures that once were held by the rulers of Cairn, but now are notably missing. The world was broken and then stripped clean, before its attackers vanished into the chaos of the Horus Heresy. I can only wonder how many other worlds within the Nostramo sector fell prey to similar attacks by forces bent on their own gain and the creation of petty empires while the eyes of the mighty were fixed on distant Terra. I fear our expedition to the Nostramo sector may be doomed to fail.

Till Night's Shroud Falls

For many years all that was known of the tragedy that befell the worlds of the Nostramo sector were rumours and half-truths, as those documents we have seen previously show. Yet in the later years of the Scouring, that last gasp of the Horus Heresy that has so bled the Imperium, new discoveries would come to light. On the bleak icy plains of Kalleth, deep in the ancient heartlands of Nostramo's old fiefdom, a ship was discovered, the *Shroud of Eventide*, the vessel of Ophion of the Kyroptera. This ship, destroyed in the same fires that had engulfed the Nostramo sector, still bore the touch of the enemy that had laid it low, stored within its frozen halls.

Marked by the IXth Legion for salvage during their initial return to the sector in 017.M31, it was not until 020.M31, in preparation for the coming edict of the Second Founding, that the warriors of the IXth returned to claim their prize. In the process of raising the hulk, the Blood Angels sought to extract and purge all remaining data records, cleansing the taint of the ship's traitorous origins, and in doing so unearthed the final moments of the battle over Kalleth, of Ophion's last victory and another glimpse of those who brought him low.

+++ IXth Legion (Cognomen: The Blood Angels)
+++ Field Report, Decahelion-9972330.703/Epsilon
+++ 6-033-020.M31
+++ Reclamation Task Force, Nostramo Sector
+++ Praetor Varsaris, 9th Chapter, IXth legion
+++ Salvage of the Hulk Designated 'Crimson Intent', Formerly 'Shroud of Eventide'
+++ Deployment Analysis
+++ As ordered by Legion command, elements of the 9th Chapter, the Angels Vermillion, have supervised the raising of the wreck of the *Shroud of Eventide*, and seen to the cleansing and re-dedication of the hulk that it may serve the sons of Sanguinius that yet remain with honour. Our task here is complete, yet some of the information retrieved from the hulk's damaged data cores warrants a separate report, that it may find its way into the hands of those who might recognise its import.

+++ Primary Objective: Salvage Report
+++ The wreck itself was surprisingly intact despite having weathered planetfall and, judging by the scars on its armoured flanks, at least one intense void duel. However, the internal data mills have suffered severe damage, apparently intentional sabotage conducted after the craft had crashed. It is only through the labour of the Mechanicum's lex-mechanics that so much usable, if fragmentary, data was retrieved. This information regards the final battle of the *Shroud of Eventide*, the most pertinent sections have been reproduced herein, and a full copy of the data appended to this report:

+++ Time-Stamp 002033011.M31, Praetor Ophion of the Kyroptera, Thramas High Orbit
+++ The sector is in utter disarray. As Sevatar and others have feared, much of the Legion has fallen to infighting and the building of petty empires, and several of those who deem themselves commanders have disputed my authority as one of the new Kyroptera. Fortunately, I have sufficient force of arms at my disposal to disabuse them of such notions, permanently.

Having made appropriate examples of the dissenters, a sizable force of my brethren gathers under my banner. I plan to travel further into the sector to rally all those who yet have the will to fight and return to aid Sevatar at the Warmaster's side, where our numbers may tip the balance of power.

Rumours persist of a rogue Crusade fleet, returned from the outer rim, the dregs of Akum-sothas, which ravages the outer worlds, exploiting the infighting amongst the Legion to strike at weakened targets. Yet, as they make no attempt to hold worlds in the Emperor's name, or to join those elements of the Loyalist Legions that persist along our borders, their allegiance remains uncertain. Regardless, they will be destroyed that my task may be accomplished without delay.

+++ Time-Stamp 223033011.M31, Praetor Ophion of the Kyroptera, Kalleth Local Space

+++ We have been engaged at the isolated world of Kalleth, a dozen cruisers emerging from the Warp to assault my small advance squadron, perhaps seeking to end my mission to gather reinforcements for the Warmaster or perhaps simply an opportunistic attack, I do not know. By their markings they are the rogue fleet we have heard rumour of, and the communications we have intercepted name them the '*Ashen Claws*'.

Caught within the planet's gravity well we have little room to manoeuvre. The *Shroud of Eventide*, as the largest craft in the fleet, has moved to intercept the enemy and act as a shield for the smaller craft and transport barges. Some of the captains have argued for retreat and the abandonment of the slower transport craft as an acceptable loss to preserve our remaining ships, but I will not countenance this. If we can but hold out and repulse this initial assault then we shall claim the advantage.

However, in order to deter rebellion amongst the ranks I have ordered that the majority of our complement be deployed on the surface of Kalleth, under the pretence of securing their safety in the coming battle. These battalions are under orders to fortify the refuelling stations there and prepare to repel enemy assault. Truly, I fear for our Legion's unity of purpose were I not present to enforce the will of the Kyroptera.

+++ Time-Stamp ~6>*19@~1.M3*, #Alle*^ O+<It

+++ Heavy fires on all decks and severe da#age to the Shroud of E#ent*ide*'s thruster arrays. We no longer have the power rese#ves to maintain orbit or bre>& free of the gravity well, however encircling squadr#-s of the fleet have crippled two {#emy craft and the Ashen Cl#w fleet is falling back. As expected, they have no stomach for a battle of attrition and pr>#er to retreat than a>cept losses.

Some of their craft w#re able to dep#-*t troops on the surface of Kalleth to strike at our #->*s there and the figh#*ng rages still. Reports from those #_>*ps below identify the foe as ghosts of the XI-#<* Legi#*, the last survivors of a fallen #-gion.

Nothing c#- now prevent our crashing on K*>leth, our vi#*<ry achi#ved. Ho-*>er I fear that shou~ I fa#l to surv#@e the f+#et will fragment and n#><e of those I have rallied will r#-+h the Warmaster's si#<.

Akum-Sothas

The Akum-sothas Cluster is a small group of habitable worlds on the very edges of the Ghoul Stars, a harsh stellar wasteland haunted by erratic pulsar stars and the most invidious of xenos breeds yet discovered by Mankind. The region was originally brought to Compliance by the Luna Wolves in the waning years of the 30th Millennium, but erupted into open revolt in 002.M31 under the influence of the so-called Unsighted Kings, a xenos breed of psyker-parasites that infested much of the population of those worlds.

Seeking to obliterate both the rebellion and the stain on his record of flawless conquests and Compliances, Horus, but recently crowned Warmaster, summoned the Space Wolves, Iron Warriors and Raven Guard to join his own Legion on the battlegrounds of the cluster. The campaign itself is renowned not for the victory that was eventually achieved, but for the massive casualties sustained by several of the Legions during the final battle, ordered by Horus to mount a direct frontal assault on the rebellion's key fortress.

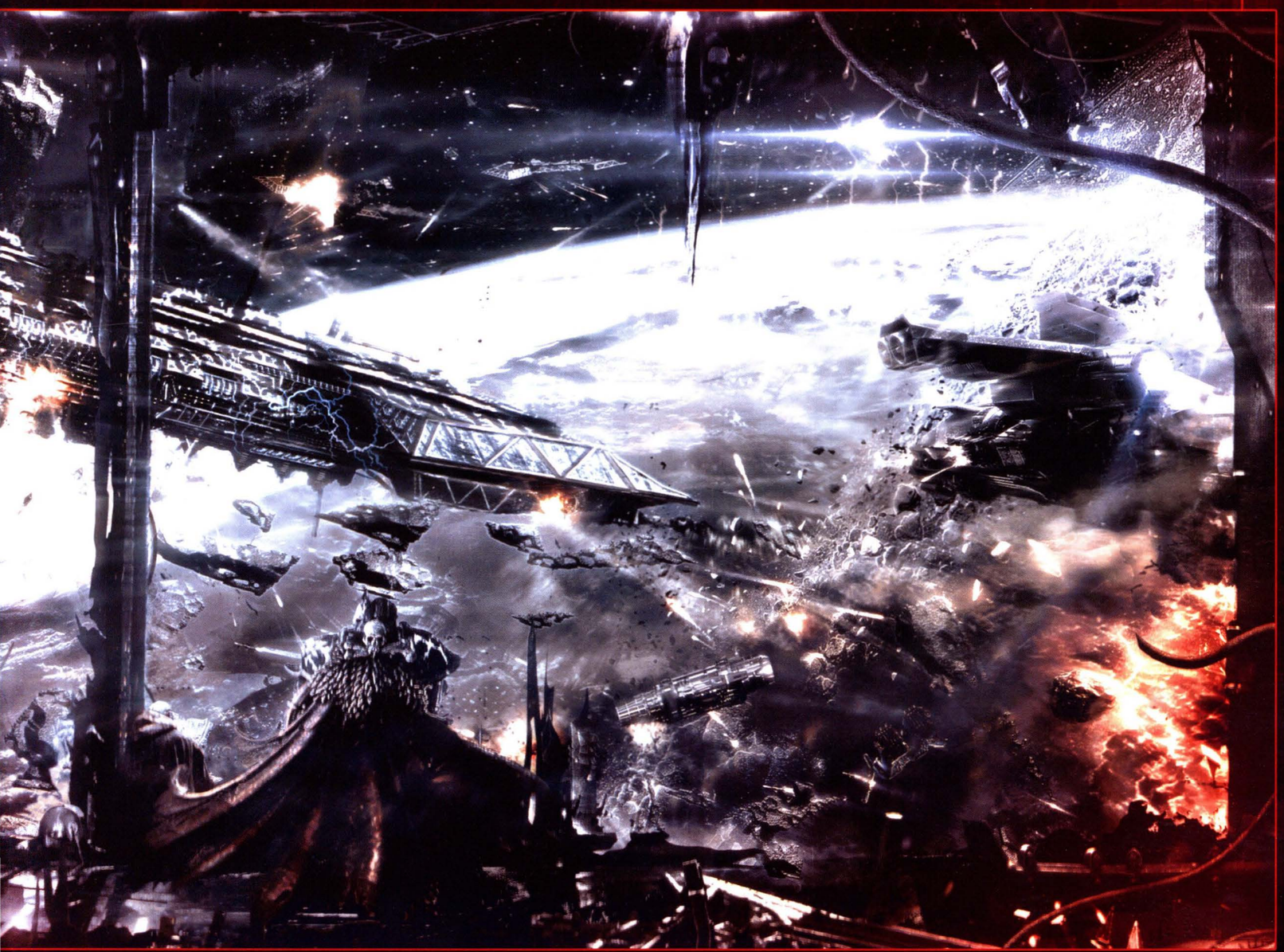
In the aftermath of the battle, several of the participating Legions, notably the Raven Guard, Luna Wolves and Iron Warriors, were to contribute warriors to a number of Great Crusade fleets dispatched further into the uncharted reaches of the Ghoul Stars to locate and eradicate any further xenos nests before they could trouble the Imperium.

The Ashen Claws

The term 'Ashen Claws' is not one immediately known to scholars of that most tumultuous period of the Imperium's history, the Horus Heresy. It is not listed as the title of any existing chapter, battalion or fleet within the eighteen Legions at the outbreak of the civil war, nor is it a title taken by one of those ad-hoc formations that survived to the war's end. Indeed, a casual search of the Imperial Archives on Terra reveals but a few possible references: an Acheron class battleship that was designated the Ashen Claw, a Solar Auxilia cohort whose unofficial designation was the Ash Claws, and the patriarch of the Knight House Moritain, whose honorary titles include '*He whose claws rend all to ash.*'

Obviously, none of these are linked to the unknown Legiones Astartes force that ravaged the Nostramo sector in 011.M31. However, those with access to the sealed vaults of the archives might uncover two further references that offer a potential answer to the puzzle. The first of these comes from the Legion records of the XIXth Legion, in the times before Corax took command and the warriors of the XIXth fought under the patronage of Horus Lupercal. These records note that among the chapters of the XIXth Legion there was a chapter by the name of the Ashen Claws, a name carried over from the Xeric tribes that these fierce warriors were recruited from. The Raven Guard of modern times hold no record of these warriors. Indeed, of the original Terran recruits of the Legion little is known, as it seems Corax bore a measure of ill will towards the Terran recruits within his Legion, both their time under the tutelage of Horus and their heritage as slaver-warlords in the asiatic dustbowls of Ancient Terra marked them out as unworthy in the eyes of their new master.

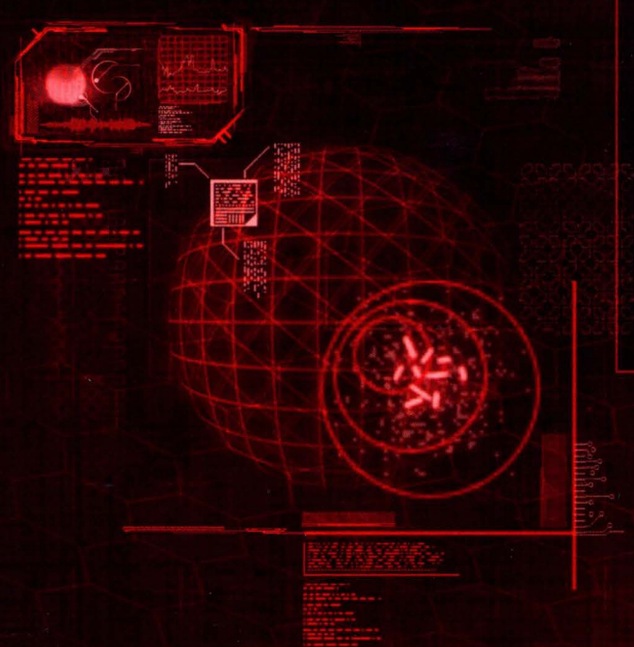
The second reference comes from those remaining fragments of the Luna Wolves' records, much of which were lost or destroyed by either war or the over-zealous loyalty of some scribes in the aftermath of the Battle for Terra. Within these volumes are several mentions of the Ashen Claw, apparently a favoured stratagem of the Warmaster himself involving a flanking manoeuvre around a sacrificial unit left in the open to attract the enemy's full might. Many engagements from the Great Crusade include units with the appended title 'Ashen Claw', indicating that it has been selected for the dubious honour of acting as the sacrificial unit at the heart of this strategy.



+++ Commanding Officer's Remarks

Of the crew of the *Shroud of Eventide* little trace has been found. Less than a hundred corpses were noted within the wreck, and a mass grave located nearby, dating back nearly a decade, was found to contain roughly four hundred additional corpses, both human and Legiones Astartes. A ship of this class would require a crew of several thousand, and most likely rate a ship's company of several hundred Legiones Astartes at minimum. Signs of long ended conflict have been found elsewhere on the planet, as well as evidence of attempts to secure the bodies of the dead and the remaining wargear, yet the crash site remains mostly untouched.

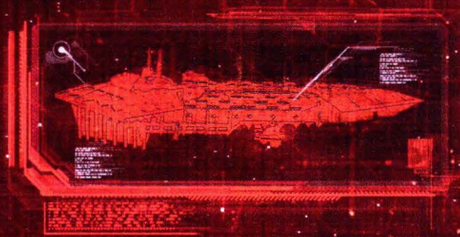
Explorator teams assigned to the 9th Chapter did uncover signs that a handful of individuals may have survived in the deep canyons and ice caves of Kalleth, but certainly not in numbers enough to account for the balance of the missing crew. However, with the successful raising of the newly designated '*Crimson Intent*', I see little reason to continue the investigation. If any survived the fall of their craft, they shall remain to rot on Kalleth. We shall depart orbit within days to complete the refit at the shipyards of Gulgorahd to rejoin those few of our brethren who remain.



At Empire's End

Having scoured the archives of Terra over the course of many years and several expeditions to the lowest vaults seeking answers to the riddle of the Nostramo sector, it seemed that both the archives and the patience of their keepers had been exhausted by my search. Little more would be uncovered for some years as forces within our battered Imperium moved to secure their power and those of us who were seen as relics of a time now past were pushed aside. The next, and perhaps final piece of the puzzle to emerge would come from the distant halls of Ultramar, passed into my hands by a loyal acolyte whose travels had led him down distant trails.

Here presented is the record of one of the battles fought by those fragments of the Ultramarines that were separated from their brethren by the advance of the Word Bearers, left isolated after the fall of Honourum. In the final days of 011.M31, under the command of Arceas Odenathus of the 10th Chapter, the Ultramarines moved to assault the world of Desperation, on the coreward edge of the Nostramo sector, seeking to establish a zone of Loyalist control in the Dominion of Storms. While the result of the battle is of little consequence to my investigation, the circumstances that brought its conclusion have much import on its answer.



+++ Ultramar, Secured Data Repository 346/Sigma, Article 4/997/011/31
+++ Internal Legion Data-Missive #4-443-893
+++ Ident-Imprint: Arceas Odinathus, Praetor, 10th Chapter
+++ Preface
+++ A Wise Man Does Not Fear, A Man Afraid Does Not Think. Codicil 1:18

My Lord Guilliman,

As per your standing orders, I have compiled a full report of our recent actions for analysis and dissemination within the Legion, though I do not know when this missive may reach your person as the fighting turns bitter in the Dominion of Storms. Our recent success in battle against the garrison forces left by the Word Bearers and World Eaters has been marred by a defeat at the hands of the Night Lords and the loss of much of the 104th and 108th Companies. The remainder of the 10th Chapter remains fit for battle, and we shall endeavour to harry the Traitors and force them to continue diverting manpower and resources to this segmentum.

+++ Section One: Of Preparations
+++ Ruthlessness is the Kindness of the Wise. Codicil 3:94

Having established our regional command post on the Loyalist Forge World of Gulgorahd, our initial strategic aim has been to create a buffer zone between Gulgorahd and nearby Traitor outposts. World Eaters units on Taur have been eliminated after being drawn into an ambush by Seeker squads from the 88th Company, and those Word Bearers companies on Caith Laes engaged in a protracted campaign of senseless genocide have been annihilated. The Night Lords stronghold of Kruun has fallen silent and Khrave nest ships have been sighted in orbit, and though it pains me to leave these foul xenos to butcher and raid unchallenged, we do not have the manpower to fight both the Traitor Legions and reavers from the Ghoul Stars. This has left Desperation as the only major enemy stronghold within striking distance.

Our last intelligence on Desperation, provided by stragglers from the 1st Legion fleet in 010.M31, placed twelve companies of Night Lords at Desperation as well as a small fleet contingent. As per our established doctrines, I mustered a force exceeding estimated enemy strength by at least fifty percent before engagement: ten companies of the 10th Chapter, seven taghma of the Taghmata Gulgorahd and a mixed company of Blood Angels and Iron Hands. This force was mustered on the recently captured world of Yaelis in 997011.M31 and subsequently moved to begin the assault in good order and provided with ample supply and fleet support.

+++ Section Two: Of Battle

+++ Wars are Won or Lost when the Battle Lines are Drawn. Codicil 18:03

On arrival at the outskirts of the Qetesh System, we found its fifth world, Desperation, to be more heavily defended than expected. Nine capital class craft and a score of lesser ships were set in defensive positions in high orbit, obviously placed to interdict long range bombardment of the planet and apparently well prepared for attack. Our own fleet, composed of six Legion strike cruisers of various types, five Gulgor assault barques and supporting small craft squadrons, held only a slight advantage in numbers. Yet as we retained the strategic initiative, our foe bound to protect the planet over which they orbited, it was decided that the fleet would press the attack. To that end the fleet was divided into three battle groups: two smaller battle groups composed of a pair of strike cruisers, each along with the majority of our more agile small craft, and a single larger formation that included all of the formidable Gulgor close assault ships and the largest of the two strike cruisers, a pair of Ancient Terran Excelsior class craft bristling with kinetic lance launchers. Utilising a variation of standard Legion envelopment tactics, the two smaller squadrons made probing attacks from opposite vectors, attempting to draw the defenders into spreading their forces thin at the centre, where the third formation waited to drive home a crippling attack at short range.

At first it seemed that the strategy had succeeded, with squadrons of Night Lords craft splitting off from the main force to counter our probing attacks. Indeed, the clumsy manoeuvring of the VIIIth Legion craft would suggest a dire lack of a cohesive command element, with the sudden shifting of their formation causing some disarray within the fleet. With our flanking elements fully engaged, the main force of the fleet moved to engage the Night Lords ships, advancing at flank speed towards Desperation. Yet those squadrons not engaged with the smaller battle groups, upon detecting the advancing phalanx of capital craft, either turned on our embattled flanking groups or fled local space entirely, making no attempt to defend the planet or engage our main force in complete defiance of established military logic.

There was little that could be done to avoid the loss of two of our cruisers, the *Amaranthine Vigil* and the *Heart of Valour*, overwhelmed by Night Lords vessels that closed to point blank range to cripple and board them. The collapse of one of the flanking actions left a clear vector for the remaining Night Lords craft to disengage and regroup on the far side of Desperation's binary moons, shielded from our guns by the two conjoined planetoids. Unwilling to retreat with the remains of the Night Lords fleet menacing our formation, the heavy assault craft began deploying landing craft and gunships, the initial stage of our conquest of Desperation. These craft took heavy casualties from surface-based defence lasers and macro cannon batteries, which the Night Lords had sited within the heavily populated hive cities of Desperation in an attempt to discourage orbital suppression with the spectre of collateral damage to the infrastructure and populace. These orbital-defence batteries were the primary targets of the initial assault groups, composed mostly of Ursarax cohorts commanded by the grim bronze-masked adepts of Gulgorahd, and Ultramarines of the 22nd Chapter, the destroyers of the Nemesis Chapter accompanied by hulking Leviathan pattern siege Dreadnoughts. As the assault groups fell prey to cunningly wrought ambushes, sabotage and entire towers rigged for destruction, the fighting bogged down into vicious, isolated street fights. We were also subject to near-continuous raids by small squadrons of Night Lords craft in orbit, targeting isolated craft and the lumbering transport barges. We were unable to fully suppress these raids while bound to protect those troops we had landed on the surface, placed in an invidious position by our own success in the initial stages of the assault.

+++ Section Three: Of Betrayal

+++ Hesitation in War is a Warrior's Greatest Betrayal. Codicil 6:14

At this point in the fighting, we had lost the initiative both in orbit and on the ground. In an effort to regain some momentum, the remainder of our landing craft were deployed, despite the destruction of less than half the enemy's ground defence batteries, heavy casualties being deemed better than complete failure. The additional forces began to shift the battle back in our favour, with Legiones Astartes of the 10th Chapter establishing safe zones for the deployment of heavy Gulgorahd artillery-automata. In orbit, the relative parity of strength between the two fleets left us with fewer offensive options, however, the intercession of a fleet of unmarked warships of Imperial pattern was to shift the balance in our favour. Emerging from warp space at some distance from Desperation, this unknown fleet, comprised of six capital class vessels, older Hoplon pattern assault cruisers of Jovian design, moved to engage the Night Lords ships. Caught between our own ships and the unidentified ebon-hulled craft, the Night Lords cruisers fell victim to a withering crossfire that left them in ruins. Only three craft managed to escape the conflagration, using the deaths of their brethren to mask the signatures of their engines as they pushed them to overload in the effort to escape our effective auspex range.

Now in control of orbital space above Desperation, we attempted to make contact with the craft that had come to our aid. The battle-scarred craft had disabled their ident broadcast signals, and did not display any sign of Legion heraldry on their hulls, yet their actions would have us suppose them enemies of the traitor Warmaster. Our attempts at communication, intended to secure their co-operation in the reduction of Night Lords' positions on the surface in the Emperor's name, met with curt rebuff, a communication transmitted across audio-only vox channels by a praetor who gave his name as Kirine, '*The Emperor consigned us to the care of a tyrant who sought to see us dead and forgotten; now the Raven Lord himself is dead, we care not to see the collar of servitude clasped around our necks once more, neither in service to the turncoat Warmaster or a failed empire.*'

The Raven's Cast-offs

The Battle of Gate 42 has often been noted by scholars of the Great Crusade as the pyre that Corvus Corax hoped would burn his Legion clean of what he saw as the unwelcome taint of many of the Terran recruits. However, if such was his intent then it was not entirely successful, for some few among those who Corax had placed amongst the vanguard yet survived. Chief among them was Nerat Kirine, the brutally efficient Terran praetor of the Ashen Claws Chapter, whose inspired hit and run tactics had brought his veteran Legionaries through the fires of battle bloodied but unbroken. Several thousand of the 18th Chapter, the Ashen Claws, remained, near every one a Terran-born veteran of the old XIXth Legion, and many were angered by the callous disregard the Raven Lord had shown for their lives and record of loyal service to the Imperium.

These warriors were marshalled in the aftermath of the battle, but not to receive the honours bestowed upon those of other Legions that had fought in the battle. Instead, the Raven Lord formed the vast majority of the remaining veterans of the old XIXth Legion, along with those freed from Deliverance whose crimes and demeanour left them ill at odds with the Primarch's perception of his Legion, and formed them into Crusade fleets. These fleets were dispatched into the dim stars of the north-eastern galactic fringe, known to explorers of the time as the Ghoul Stars, there to bring the light of the Emperor to the dark at the edges of the galaxy, far from the eyes of the fledgling Imperium and the brooding lord of the Raven Guard.

+++ Section Four: Of Defiance

+++ Doubt is the Greatest Weapon of our Foe. Codicil 3:48

Despite such slander of the Emperor and His chosen Primarchs, the craft under Kirine's command did not attempt to target or engage our ships, but instead approached the planet and began to launch their own landing craft. Eager to avoid a three-way conflict, those Loyalist craft in the area were ordered to keep their distance unless locked onto by targeting augurs, however my attempts were to prove to be in vain. The dropcraft of the cast-off Raven Guard vectored towards the principal armorium of Desperation's sprawling hive, an area mostly under the control of pathfinder units of the 10th Chapter. These dropcraft disgorged a host of Legiones Astartes clad in worn battle plate bearing a heraldry of black and red. Organised into small fast moving units, these Legiones Astartes engaged in a brutal strike and fade assault against the Ultramarines in the area. Though far from unprepared for such a treacherous attack, for we had all learned lessons from the fall of Honourum and Calth, the sheer ferocity of the assault carried it home. With our surviving squads falling back to sound defensive positions, the Raven Guard were able to occupy the armorium, bringing up their landing craft with the apparent intent of looting the store of arms and munitions kept within.

For the next few hours, the site of the armorium became the focus of the fighting on Desperation, with the Raven Guard mounting a stubborn defence of the complex, now besieged by fresh Ultramarines units from the 10th and 22nd Chapters, and with Night Lords terror squads launching probing attacks and ambushing isolated units of either side. All the while, a stream of Raven Guard shuttle craft emptied the armorium under the watchful eye of squadrons of Fire Raptor gunships and smaller fighter craft, whilst in orbit a tense war of manoeuvre saw our capital ships attempting to force the enemy out of geo-synchronous orbit of the armorium. While we were unable to displace the enemy cruisers, and remained unwilling to endanger our remaining undamaged capital craft, a breakthrough in the defences thrown up around the armorium was forced by the Destroyers of the 22nd Chapter, their Leviathan Siege Dreadnoughts battering down the hastily erected barricades under heavy fire. With a hole punched in their fortifications, the Raven Guard were forced into a fighting retreat, evacuating as many of their units as possible as the noose was closed. The last of their units, a squad of Cataphractii Terminators, sealed the doors of the armorium behind them, though when it was later prised open they were gone, having most likely teleported to the waiting cruisers above. In the wake of the Raven Guard's evacuation, Night Lords units began a hive-wide counter-attack, surging forwards into the exhausted Ultramarines units across the city.

+++ Summation

+++ Knowledge is the Truest Weapon in a General's Arsenal. Codicil 9:23

In defence of our own troops, we were forced to evacuate those forces on the ground, suffering heavy casualties in the process. By necessity this left us unable to oppose the retreat of the Raven Guard cruisers, which left orbit in possession of a sizable store of munitions, but having paid for them in the blood of their fallen brethren. On Desperation the Night Lords once again controlled the hive city, which had been mostly reduced to rubble during the day's hard fought battles, and our only recourse was to bombard the city from orbit. While we assume that many Night Lords units were able to seek sanctuary in pre-prepared shelters in the hive's lower levels, the remainder will be combat ineffective and unable to leave the ruins with their fleet destroyed or scattered.

Carrion Birds All; Red Pinioned and Bright-eyed

'...And as Ilium falls to dust and ruin, so does the inevitable doom of Rhome hasten towards us.'

Attr. to the Helac warlord Skypio Aemilanos

When gathered in hand, the various hidden, buried or lost scraps of history make plain a number of causes for the destruction found in the Nostramo sector at the end of the Horus Heresy. Prime among these being the actions of a fleet of Raven Guard turned not to the service of the Warmaster's dire schemes, but rather to a mandate of greed and mercenary intent.

Full research into the origins of the Ashen Claws fleet notes that they were despatched on-Crusade in 002.M31, the commander of the expedition, Praetor Calvus, a Deliverance survivor known for his loyalty to Corax. What fate Praetor Calvus met is unknown, but it is likely that by the return of the Ashen Claws in 011.M31 he had perished. With an original complement of thirteen capital craft, a score of smaller ships and some 4,000 of the Legiones Astartes assembled from the survivors of the fighting in Akum-sothos, the fleet was a significant force, even assuming that nine years of Crusading had taken its toll on the fleet. In fact, it is this slow bleeding of resources and manpower over the course of their exile that likely led to the tactics displayed in the few records we have of their actions, all of which seem to have been focused on the acquisition of resources and munitions.

However, despite the focus of those accounts we have seen on the actions of the Ashen Claws, it is highly unlikely that they could be the sole cause of the collapse of the Nostramo sector. Indeed, the sources noted point out the other key factors in this end result, those being an influx of xenos attacks as the Imperial presence along the tumultuous borders of the Ghoul Stars waned, and the infighting amongst the fractious and leaderless Night Lords. That these were only exacerbated by the raiding and destruction left in the wake of the Ashen Claws is undoubted, but without these factors it is unlikely that the relatively small number of Raven Guard could otherwise have achieved such success. Indeed, this phenomenon was far from rare throughout the Imperium during the years of the Horus Heresy, innumerable sectors fell silent, some never to be heard from again, and it is likely that many of these were the result of other rogue formations of Legiones Astartes unable to reconcile loyalty to either their Emperor or the Warmaster.

Whatever the causes, the fragmentation of the Nostramo sector would have dire repercussions for the north-eastern fringes of the Imperium. At the recommendation of the Divisio Militaris, the High Lords of Terra issued an edict declaring the Nostramo sector and those sectors adjoining it a forbidden zone to Imperial craft, save those with special dispensation. The borders of the Imperium contracted and a great swathe of space was abandoned to the ravages of xenos predators and the few scattered bands of rebels that lingered on remote worlds. With the final fate of the Ashen Claws undocumented, it may be that they also lurk somewhere within these forbidden stars, that far from the eyes of the Imperium those worlds brought to Compliance by their final Crusade still survive. I wonder perhaps, in the face of the changes wrought on the Emperor's realm in the wake of His hollow victory, if perhaps they chose the wiser course.

Historia Terra Regnum

Addendum

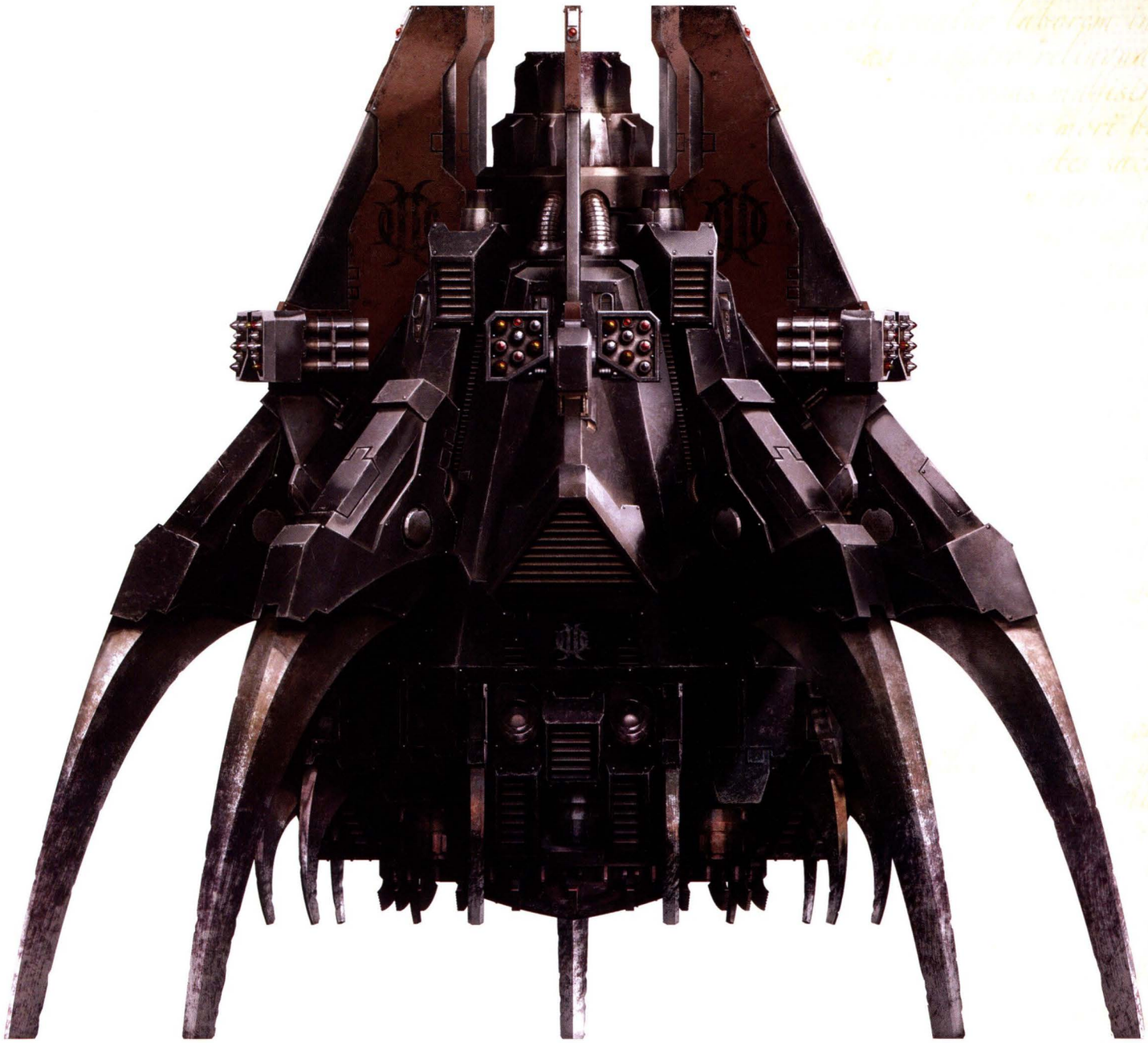
Long years have passed since this report was entered into the archives of the Divisio Militaris, a relic of times past that has been reborn anew to serve a changed empire. Few in this new empire care to look back at what once was, and of those even less have time for the forgotten mysteries of a war now passing into legend and myth – yet some few still harken to the words of an old man whose time is fast drawing to a close. Passed to my hands by those who still remember the days when the Emperor walked among His people is this one last piece of the puzzle, a warning perhaps that in the dark beyond, there yet remain those who are unwilling to accept the new order that now overtakes the Imperium.

Far Rim Monitoring Station Occludus, 108th Independent Company, Captain Crysos Morturg Commanding. Deep Range Patrol Report, 063.M31

As part of a routine sweep along the outer edges of the restricted sectors of the Ghoul Stars, the strike craft of Spectre squadron intercepted a fragment of an Astropathic message bearing Imperial code-memes of ancient provenance. The transmission date appended to the message would have it as being less than a year old, but this must be in error as no human realms are known to have survived in the Ghoul Stars. As such, the nature of the message leads us to believe that it may be some kind of warp echo, perhaps dating back to the days of the Great Crusade, although it shows none of the degradation that usually accompanies such echoes.

A full transliteration follows:

'...Fourth Company reports the asteroid settlements of the Orcades brought into Compliance as per the edicts of the Second Crusade, one thousand souls claimed as bondsmen for the Legion that it may grow and prosper. Expect our return to Atargatis within the month for reassignment.'



Ashen Claws Kharybdis Assault Claw

Unit Designation Unknown

Battle of Kalleth

Scattered pict records recovered from the wreck of the Night Lords cruiser *Shroud of Eventide*, depict this assault pod among the squadrons of boarding craft launched against the Night Lords vanguard that held the line over Kalleth. Such was the stubborn defiance of the VIIIth Legion crew, that when the broken hulk of the *Shroud of Eventide* descended into the clouds of Kalleth there were over two dozen boarding torpedoes and assault craft latched onto its skin.

Though lacking in certain patterns of more recently issued equipment, the raiding fleet known as the Ashen Claw seemed well supplied with these oft-maligned craft, deploying squadrons with abandon during the closing phases of the void battle above Kalleth. Operating in the deep void and within the atmosphere of Kalleth as both transport and heavy gunship, these craft appear to be one of the favoured transports for veteran infantry units among the Ashen Claw.

Ashen Claw Orbital Interface Assault Groups

In all of the scant reports of encounters between forces engaged in the grand wars of the Horus Heresy and the piratical warband known as the Ashen Claw, the forces of that enigmatic group have displayed a marked preference for the deployment of orbital interface craft, almost to the exclusion of other types of support unit. While, as with all the Legiones Astartes, the armoured post-human infantry of the Space Marines remains the core of their operations, all of the great Legions supplement these forces with a variety of support units, each intended to fulfil a specific goal upon the field of battle.

Not so the Ashen Claw, whether by necessity or tactical preference these raiders and pillagers deployed a variety of interface fighters, bombers and assault craft in support of their fast moving infantry forces, shunning the slower moving armoured columns that typified some Legions.

Perhaps this extreme military specialisation is a consequence of the supposed limited manpower and material available to such a splinter faction of the larger conflict, reinforced by need and circumstance. If this is so then it must be assumed that the Ashen Claw had already prosecuted war in this limited fashion for some time in order to explain their experience and skill in the deployment of such ad-hoc formations and tactics. Honed perhaps to a keen edge on long since forgotten alien worlds in the deep black beyond the Imperium's borders, these tactics proved a deadly surprise to those forces they encountered on their return to Imperial space.

As evidenced by the few recorded instances of the Ashen Claw in combat, their ground assaults are preceded by a wave of interface fighters and gunships, Storm Eagles and Primaris-lightnings tasked with the elimination of anti-aircraft defences and key strongpoints. Following these craft are massed Kharybdis and Dreadclaw drop pod squadrons, packed with the fleet-moving infantry squads favoured by the Ashen Claw. These infantry formations rarely sought to hold ground, instead seeking to suppress and circumvent the enemy's main strength and defeat him piecemeal. The aim of such attacks was almost always the seizure of munitions and weaponry rather than conquest or simple slaughter, a focus that left more conventionally minded tacticians among the Legiones Astartes wrong footed when facing them in battle.

Ashen Claw Primaris-Lightning

Unit Designation Unknown

XIIIth Legion Designation 'Bloodhawk'

During the fighting on Desperation, this Primaris-lightning, its pilot unknown, accounted for four Ultramarines Xiphon fighter craft and decimated several ground detachments. Flying eight sorties over the course of the battle, its destruction was deemed a primary objective for the XIIIth Legion forces, who identified it by the distinctive red wing art and its vindictive strafing runs over field hospitals. Post battle reports indicate the craft was intercepted by a wing of Fire Raptor gunships, but cannot confirm the destruction of the craft.

The Retribution Campaign

"The surest measure of a leader's worth is the number of his enemies. A leader with no enemies is no leader at all."

Lessons in Contumacy, Hieronymus Scathe

INTRODUCTION

The Retribution campaign is a means for gamers to play through a series of linked games inspired by the events and characters presented throughout this book. The campaign draws on the system in *The Horus Heresy Book Four – Conquest*, which was written to provide a core set of rules and optional details that can be expanded to accommodate a range of events within the vast sweep of the Age of Darkness. The Retribution campaign has been created as a framework about which a gaming group can build their own campaign fought between the types of forces described already in this book – Shattered Legions, Blackshields and any other force separated from its high command, whether by circumstance or deliberate intent, and fighting their own private wars far from the front lines of the Horus Heresy.

The campaign framework is divided into two sub-types, which between them cover most of the types of conflict described in the stories in this book. The first sub-type represents a force prosecuting a guerrilla war deep inside enemy territory, such as that fought by the Shattered Legions as the Warmaster captured ever greater expanses of the galaxy. The second sub-type represents two outcast or isolated forces engaged in a bitter fight against one another, such as might be fought between rival Blackshield groups seeking to carve their own destinies in the wilderness space beyond territory claimed by either Traitor or Loyalist.

This chapter also presents a set of 'Shadow Wars' missions, which may be used in the same manner as the core Age of Darkness missions, whether in a campaign or in one-off games. These have been written to exemplify the types of battle that might be fought between bitter enemies, and in each of them one side is attempting to 'get the drop' on the other, represented by a special roll-off to determine which side has the immediate advantage.

Lastly, a special mission is provided that is fought in addition to and as a preliminary clash between two armies. The Vanguard mission is fought between an attacking side's kill team and a defending side's sentries immediately before any other mission is fought and over the same terrain. The effect of the Vanguard mission directly affects the main mission, adding an additional level of tactical interplay to an afternoon's gaming. The Vanguard mission is an ideal opportunity to field some more specialised units that may not always see deployment, such as a Legion Recon Squad or Legion Seeker Squad, or to use them in a manner that really shows off their character and abilities.

BEHIND ENEMY LINES

The first sub-type of the Retribution campaign represents an 'irregular' faction, such as a Shattered Legion or Blackshields force, operating across territory that is well and truly under the control of the enemy. The aim of this irregular force is not to take and hold particular locations in that territory, but to cause such disruption to the foe's lines of communication that their high command is compelled to divert forces meant for the distant front line in an effort to reinforce destabilised rear areas.

While a normal Conquest campaign generally represents the struggle for control of various locations across a single world (or system if using the additional System Conquest rules), this form of Retribution campaign fought behind enemy lines is assumed to take place across a wider area of space. Because this area is not dominated or being fought over by massive warring armies, movement through it is assumed to be relatively easy. Small strike forces can slip unseen into a planetary system to launch a raid upon a lightly defended listening station, for example. The attackers are limited in number but mobile, while the defenders have a presence across the entire region, meaning battle could erupt almost anywhere. Because each Strategic objective might be located on an entirely separate world in the region, it is especially appropriate to use the War Zone Traits special rules found in *The Horus Heresy Book Four – Conquest*.

This sub-type of campaign is fought using the Conquest campaign system presented in *The Horus Heresy Book Four – Conquest*, with the following modifications:

- One side participating in the campaign is designated the 'Occupier' and assumes the role of the commander of the armies of occupation tasked with maintaining order and control in their territory.
- The other side is designated the 'Insurgent', and takes the role of the leader of a coalition of small forces striking from the shadows in an attempt to weaken the Occupier's control of the region.
- The Occupier begins the campaign with a single Control point at each Strategic objective.
- The Insurgent begins the campaign with 1 additional Reserves point per Strategic objective being used (use the Occupier's Reserves points to determine the number of Strategic objectives in use).
- The campaign ends in any Consolidation phase in which the Occupier has no remaining Reserves points. At this point, control of Strategic objectives is calculated as normal and the overall winner determined. If the Insurgent wins, this represents their efforts forcing the Occupier to request reinforcements from further afield, which to the Insurgent represents a strategic victory and to the Occupier a humiliating (and possibly fatal) admission of failure. If the Occupier wins, they have succeeded in crushing the insurgency without having to call in reinforcements.
- When the Insurgent is attacking (ie, when that side has issued a Challenge in the Mustering phase), the Age of Darkness Strategic Raids missions are used, with the Insurgent side as the 'Raider' and the Occupier as the 'Garrison'.
- When the Occupier is the Attacker, players may select or randomly determine missions in any mutually agreed fashion, representing a comparatively rare instance of the Occupier succeeding in bringing the elusive enemy to open battle.

Note that the roles of Occupier and Insurgent are not specifically tied to the Traitor or Loyalist factions. While the Iron Hands, Raven Guard and Salamanders who escaped from Isstvan V undertook a long and bitter war against Traitor forces occupying the territory Horus won as he advanced on Terra, isolated Traitor elements may likewise have fought deep inside Loyalist territory, paving the way for the advancing Traitor armies. In addition, while it is most appropriate that the Insurgent side uses the Shattered Legion rules as presented on page 202, they could just as equally be a Legiones Astartes force using the Blackshields special rules found on page 218, or any other configuration that fits the players' vision for their campaign. Likewise, it is highly appropriate for the Occupier to use the Army of Dark Compliance Theme on page 206, but again, this is ultimately up to the players.

Stalemate

Due to the modifications to the Conquest system given here, it may come to pass that the Occupier does not wish to expend Reserves points to issue a Challenge and that the Insurgent has none left to spend, a situation where one side is unwilling and the other unable to instigate an attack. One way around this is to play one of the Shadow War missions presented later on, with neither side expending a Reserves point to issue the Challenge, but with the winner earning a Reserves point instead of a Control point. This represents both sides making probing attacks into territory neither fully controls and the winner earning a valuable strategic advantage they can exploit in the coming battles.

Example Behind Enemy Lines Campaign: Against the Dark Tide

The following is an example of how a campaign fought behind enemy lines might be set up, developed and play out. This campaign features two players, both of whom already own a main Legiones Astartes army and who have both started to add additional elements to their main force.

The Loyalist player, James, has a substantial force of Imperial Fists, to which he has recently added several squads of Blood Angels and White Scars. With three Legions represented in his collection, James decides to make full use of the Shattered Legions Theme presented on page 202. The army is led by an Imperial Fists Legion Praetor and additional Headquarters choices include a Blood Angels Legion Praetor, allowing James to take additional Blood Angels units, and a White Scars Legion Vigilator, opening up the option of additional White Scars units. As the Blood Angels and White Scars Legions do not at the time have their own Legion-specific special units, James decides to use what he considers the most appropriate Legiones Astartes squads, choosing a Legion Assault Squad for the Blood Angels and a Legion Seeker Squad for the White Scars.

James' opponent in the campaign is Mark, who has been collecting a Legiones Astartes Iron Warriors force for a while and who also has a large collection of Renegade Militia, which were first featured in *Imperial Armour – The Siege of Vraks*, a Forge World Warhammer 40,000 supplement. By combining these two collections using the Army of Dark Compliance rules in this book, Mark has a substantial and highly characterful army, with the Iron Warriors serving as the cold-hearted overlords to masses of Traitor militia.

It is obvious which side will fulfil which role in the campaign – the Loyalist Shattered Legions under their Imperial Fists leader will serve as the Insurgent side, while the Iron Warriors and their militia slave-soldiers will serve as the Occupiers side. The campaign will therefore represent a force of Imperial Fists operating far from their own Legion, stranded by the sudden onset of the Ruinstorm, coming together with the remnants of the two other Loyalist Legions also cast adrift by the capricious tides of the unquiet Warp.

The players decide that the Iron Warriors represent a cadre tasked by the Warmaster with reinforcing the region against Loyalist counter-attack and ensuring its worlds maintain a steady output of materiel to supply the Traitor hosts as they advance on distant Terra, a task the bitter sons of Perturabo are in many ways ideally suited to perform.

Developing the Campaign

With their armies and roles agreed upon, Mark and James set about determining the details of the campaign, drawing on the core Conquest campaign rules presented in *The Horus Heresy Book Four – Conquest*. With just two players, they agree to play the campaign at the 'Isolated Skirmish' scale. The Occupiers will start with 4 Reserves points and the campaign will be fought over three Strategic objectives. The Behind Enemy Lines campaign special rules state that the Occupier begins with 1 Control point at each Strategic objective (so Mark begins with 3 Control points), and that the Insurgent begins with an additional Reserves point for each Strategic objective (meaning that James begins with 7 Reserves points).

The players then set their minds to deciding what, if any, additional campaign special rules they wish to make use of. They agree that the three Strategic objectives should represent different worlds, key planets in a sector the Traitors have recently conquered and which the Warmaster needs to supply his armies. Therefore, these worlds will each use a different War Zone Trait to represent its dominant terrain type, but in fitting with the nature of the campaign —a guerrilla war fought in numerous locations rather than a static front line— each game would be fought using a different Strategic Objective Trait, rolled according to the chart the players produce between them (shown below).

Strategic Objective 1 – Enesidaon

This planet is the lynchpin world in the sector and its prodigious output of raw materials supplies several Traitor Mechanicum Forge Worlds manufacturing specialised heavy weaponry for the Warmaster's armies. Centuries of open cast mining by its inhabitants have reduced much of the surface to a radiation-scoured wasteland. Millions of short-lived industrial helots are packed into the refinery-habs that serve as the world's primary centres of population, and it is at these and several outlying locations that the bulk of battles fought on the world will take place.

War Zone Trait: Rad Wastes

Strategic Objective Traits

D6	Trait
1-3	None (the battle is fought in the open wastes)
4-5	Manufactorum Complex
6	Planetary Spaceport

Strategic Objective 2 – Qerasia 7/12

The twelfth moon of Qerasia 7 is a world dominated by shallow, stinking seas that are home to teeming shoals of macro-krill. Few would choose to live on such a world, but it proved a valuable asset during the Great Crusade, its fauna providing a readily accessible and easily processed bulk protein source for the vast armies of conquest as they marched relentlessly outwards from Terra. With the coming of the Horus Heresy, the Warmaster's lieutenants moved quickly to ensure such worlds were secured to feed their own armies.

War Zone Trait: Grasping Mire

Strategic Objective Traits

D6	Trait
1-4	None (the battle is fought in the swamps)
5	Manufactorum Complex
6	Planetary Spaceport

Strategic Objective 3 - Manasa

Manasa was catalogued as a minor hive world when first discovered, one far fallen from its erstwhile glory and barely clinging on to existence by the time the Great Crusade arrived. Its people are notoriously bitter and resentful of authority, and so the Emperor's iterators found bringing them fully into the Imperial Truth an arduous and somewhat thankless task. Now that the Warmaster is their ultimate master, the people of the hive world of Manasa have been discovered to be of use, for they make ready and willing conscripts into the Warmaster's mortal hosts.

War Zone Trait: Hive Cities

Strategic Objective Traits

D6	Trait
1-3	None (the battle is fought in the wastes between the hive cities)
4	Armoury Vaults
5	Macro Weapons Battery
6	Fortified Bastion Complex

Looking over the remainder of the optional Conquest campaign special rules, the players decide they will use the Character Progression rules, and that each of their Warlords will have a Relic of the Dark Age of Technology. With that, the campaign begins.

The Campaign in Action

With two players competing for three Strategic objectives, Mark and James determine to play at least one game a week. With Mark beginning the campaign already in overall control of the three target worlds, James has something of an uphill battle ahead of him, but with an advantage in Reserves points, he knows the task is not insurmountable. James wins the initiative in the first two Mustering phases, playing a Diversionary Strike and a Headhunting Strategic Raid mission, with victory in both earning a Control point at Enesidaon and Qerasia 7/12. After two turns, the Insurgents are just a single point away from equalling the Occupier's overall control. In the third turn, James wins the initiative once more and seeks to match Mark's overall control by taking Manasa, but his attack meets with fiercer resistance than before and is repulsed. This game was a Combat Extraction Strategic Raid mission, and the players decide that it would be appropriate for the Strategic Asset being fought over to be Vital Defectors. Mark provides a small group of models from his Traitor Militia collection to serve as the would-be defectors, and when James is unsuccessful, they imagine that their professed change of allegiance is either short-lived or more likely bait to lure the Loyalists into a lethal trap.

In turn four, Mark finally wins the initiative, his Iron Warriors and Militia bringing the Insurgents to battle in the rad wastes of Enesidaon. As it was the Occupier who won the Initiative, a standard Age of Darkness mission is played – in this case Blood Feud. Though they are caught unawares in the open, the Insurgents are able to escape the Traitors, but still the Occupiers hold overall control in the campaign.

In the last few turns of the campaign however, the gods of war appear to favour the Loyalists. James wins the initiative and launches a second assault upon Manasa, this time earning a convincing victory in a Strategic Raids Scorched Earth mission that brings his overall Control points total level with Mark's. With both sides almost out of Reserves points however, James will have to maintain the pressure in order to win the campaign.

Going into the final turn, the campaign stands at a draw, with the Occupiers firmly in control of Qerasia 7/12 and the Insurgents dominating at Enesidaon. With the Occupiers out of Reserves points, the fate of the region hangs in the balance, and so will be decided by a final confrontation between these bitter foes.

Instead of playing a standard game, the players decide that the final battle should be something special, inspired by the story that had evolved over the course of the campaign. Looking over the various books in the Horus Heresy series, one particular type of game stands out – the Blood in the Void expansion for the Zone Mortalis rules, found in *The Horus Heresy Book Three – Extermination*. Pooling enough Zone Mortalis terrain to represent the interior of a space ship, they decide to fight a boarding action, reasoning that the flagships of both sides have encountered one another and their respective leaders come face-to-face on the bridge of the boarded vessel. They agree to fight a Zone Mortalis Wrecking Mission, the target of which will be the Ship's Bridge. All that remains is to determine which side will be the one undertaking the boarding action.

The answer comes in the form of the Shadow Wars roll-off special rule, representing one side's flagship ambushing the other at the very moment the region's fate hangs in the balance between Traitor and Loyalist. It is Mark who wins the roll-off and he decides that his Iron Warriors will be the boarders in the mission.

The ensuing battle is bloody in the extreme, with both sides inflicting heavy losses on the other as the boarders close on their target. By the time the final confrontation between Warlords comes about, both sides have been reduced to a fraction of their starting numbers. The Iron Warriors Warlord and his retinue find the Imperial Fists leader waiting for them at the centre of his bridge, attended by his White Scars and Blood Angels allies. The two sides clash, the ensuing combat determining the result of the entire war – the leader of the Iron Warriors is slain, but so too is that of the Imperial Fists. Mark's Iron Warriors have won. The Blood Angels and White Scars leaders survive however, and the players imagine that though forced to withdraw from the region as the Traitors assert full control over their worlds, they will rise again elsewhere and continue their unseen war far behind enemy lines. The Warmaster's march on Terra will in the meantime continue unabated, its baleful gaze firmly fixed on that ultimate prize.

SHADOW WAR

The second sub-type of campaign represents an on-going war between two opposed forces, both of which are operating alone, cut off from any higher command. One or both sides could be Shattered Legions, Blackshields or any other force that might fight in this manner. Such wars were fought throughout the Age of Darkness and were especially vicious – one particular example is to be found in the Warmaster's ordering of Emperor's Children and Sons of Horus units to scour the systems around Isstvan to track down and slay any Loyalists who might have escaped the Dropsite Massacre. Other such wars might represent rival Blackshield groups vying for supremacy, looking to settle old grievances or attempting to carve their own pocket empires beyond the gaze of either Terra or the Warmaster.

A Shadow War campaign is not fought over territory and its battles do not generally revolve around taking specific objectives. Instead, the rival factions are engaged in a running game of cat and mouse, during which the role of hunter and hunted can switch back and forth without warning at any moment. Bitter enemies track each other through the wilderness or attempt ambushes where the foe thinks themselves invulnerable to attack. Debts of blood are settled and new ones incurred, for this type of war is singularly personal. Warriors come to know their foe and to hate them all the more, repaying blood with blood until one side or the other is utterly defeated. Even should neither side in Mankind's galactic civil war ever know of their deeds, the combatants fight on, giving all not for the advancement of their own side, but that their foe's objectives and ambitions might be ruined.

A Shadow War campaign is fought using the Conquest campaign system presented in *The Horus Heresy Book Four – Conquest*, with the following modifications:

- Instead of representing locations, Strategic objectives represent goals or milestones that both sides must complete in order to bring about the ultimate end of their foe. If they wish, players may link these abstract measures of success to concrete goals, further details of which are provided later on.
- By default, Shadow War campaigns make use of the Shadow Wars missions presented later in this section. However, if both players wish, they may make use of any other Age of Darkness missions or the Eternal War missions in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.
- When rolling off for Initiative in the Mustering phase, players may secretly bolster their roll by expending Reserves points. Having written down the amount they wish to apply, both sides should reveal it to the other before the Shadow War roll-off is made, both sides adding the declared bonus to their roll. Having made the roll, both sides reduce their Reserves points total by the amount they bid.
- The amount that is bid is also added to the Shadow Wars roll-off, which is described on page 175.
- At any time, a player making a Challenge may declare that the coming battle is to feature a Vanguard mission, as presented on page 158. Victory in the main battle that the Vanguard mission precedes earns the winner a reward equal to 1 Reserves point plus the amount of points bid to win the initiative (if any).
- The ultimate winner of the campaign is determined in the usual manner, as described in the Conquest campaign system.

Strategic Objectives – Goals

As already mentioned, each of the Strategic objectives in a Shadow War campaign represents not a physical location, but a goal or milestone in the war that both sides have no choice but to acknowledge as a visible measure of its progress. While these objectives can be thought of as simple abstract markers of progress, they can also be developed into specific goals that can affect the course of the campaign and make it all the more memorable for all involved.

Goals work in a similar way to the Strategic Objective Traits presented in the Conquest campaign system. Instead of representing the specific qualities of a locale however, they represent a particular ambition the opposed war leaders are seeking to realise. Players may decide between them if any of the following goals are to be used and if they wish, they can use multiples of the same one, representing that specific goal being especially important in the campaign being fought.

Note that the effects incurred by one side having control of a Strategic objective that has a goal associated with it apply to all games played, not just ones at that Strategic objective.

Goal 1 – Strategic Dominance
Establishing dominance in a war zone is a key military objective, for it allows the dominant faction to move forces about the contested territory at will, while their enemy's freedom of movement is curtailed.

The side with the highest total of Control points at this Strategic objective may re-roll Reserves rolls and Outflank rolls.

Goal 2 – Soul of Mankind
This objective represents the drive to win the 'hearts and minds' of the peoples of the region. Generally, the battle for the soul is a battle to win or force allegiance to a cause. In the case of the Loyalists, the aim might be to reinforce the notion that Terra has not abandoned them, while the Traitors are likely to be propagating the opposite notion. Both sides need materiel resources, from ordnance to food, and ensuring the flow of such supplies calls for the cooperation —willing or otherwise— of planetary populations.

The side with the highest total of Control points at this Strategic objective earns an additional Victory point in all games where Victory points are used to determine the winner.

Goal 3 – Personal Glory
Personal glory is a potent driver for many war leaders and so countless battles have been fought for little more than to fuel the cult of personality of a powerful general.

The Warlord of the side with the highest total of Control points at this Strategic objective gains an additional Victory point each time they slay an enemy character in a Challenge.

Goal 4 – Deeds Endure
For some in war, deeds are all. They seek to be known for all time by the winning of great victories that will become markers of the progress of the ongoing war.

The side with the highest total of Control points at this Strategic objective earns an additional Control point in any game in which it fulfils the Slay the Warlord Secondary Objective.

Goal 5 – The First Lesson
The war for knowledge is one often waged unseen alongside the more visible battles of a campaign. The commander who can gain intelligence on their foe while keeping knowledge of their own force's disbursement hidden may win a potent advantage indeed.

The side with the highest total of Control points at this Strategic objective adds an additional +1 to the result when making a Shadow Wars roll-off.

Example Shadow War Campaign: War in the Shadows

The following is an example of a Shadow War campaign, fought between two players and inspired by some of the events recounted earlier in this book. The players like the idea of two isolated forces waging a bitter and darkly personal war, far from the main theatres of conflict. One of these players, Stephen, has an Emperor's Children force as his main army and he has recently considered expanding his collection by adding Space Marine allies from another Legion. The Shattered Legions special rules allow him to do just that, and he decides that adding in some Sons of Horus units will fit the coming campaign well. The other player, David, has read the rules for fielding Blackshields and decided that these outcasts are the force for him.

Comparing the forces at their disposal, Stephen and David decide that, like the character 'the Nemean' in the Eye of the Storm chapter, David's Blackshields Reaver Lord would be an outcast from another Legion, and in this case they decide the Legion in question will be the Emperor's Children. For whatever reason, the Reaver Lord has renounced his oaths to the IIIrd Legion and obscured his colours with the blank panoply of the Blackshields. Having gathered together a force of similarly outcast warriors, the Reaver Lord seeks to establish his own sovereign domain out among the Halo Stars, far from either side in Mankind's galactic civil war. Stephen's Emperor's Children are therefore tasked with hunting the Blackshields down for their crimes, while the Sons of Horus Legionaries are present as envoys of the Warmaster, to ensure that the Emperor's Children ultimately serve the cause of Horus even as they settle their own matters of honour.

Developing the Campaign

Having agreed on their armies, the players get to the task of setting up the campaign itself. With one player per side, the campaign will be counted as an 'Isolated Skirmish' in scale, at which it is suggested that both sides have between 3 and 5 Reserve points. Having read the rules for a Shadow War campaign, the players appreciate that their Reserves points might be expended faster than they would in a normal Conquest campaign, due to the facility to spend Reserves points to bolster the Initiative roll-off in the Mustering phase. For this reason, the players agree on having 5 Reserves points each, reasoning that this level will allow them each to spend the occasional point to bolster their position, and these can also be won back by winning the special Vanguard mission presented later on.

Next, the players need to decide on the Strategic objectives that will feature in the campaign. At the scale being played, three Strategic objectives is the norm, and consulting the Shadow War campaign special rules, the players decide that all three should have a Strategic objective goal assigned to it. Considering the nature of the characters leading both sides, Stephen and David decide that the Strategic objectives will use the Strategic Dominance, Personal Glory and Deeds Endure goals.

Although it is not strictly needed for such a campaign, the players take some time to set the scene for their games. They decide that the Blackshields are made up of a mixture of remnant forces drawn from several Legions, who are seeking to claim a safe haven for themselves somewhere in the stellar wastelands of the extreme northern reaches of the Ultima Segmentum. The combined Emperor's Children and Sons of Horus force has been ordered by the Warmaster to track down any threat to the territory he has captured during his campaign of 'Dark Compliance'. The Traitors are operating far from their own Legions and beyond the limits of the Traitors' lines of communication. This makes for an interesting reversal of roles, for which the Blackshields force will use the Legiones Astartes special rules presented elsewhere in this book, while the Traitors will be operating as a Shattered Legions force. Furthermore, the Blackshields can only be considered Loyalists in so far as circumstance has set them against the Warmaster's cause – in reality they are their own faction and they have no contact with or perhaps even real sympathy for the Loyalist cause.

The region of space that the players have decided to fight over is one that appears empty on most maps of the galaxy. Of course, this does not mean that the region is devoid of worlds, and so the players decide to use a range of the War Zone Traits presented in the Conquest campaign system. Because Shadow War campaigns are not fought over territory, each battle could take place in an entirely different location, which given the context of the campaign both agree is highly appropriate. They decide that some of the War Zone Traits are less suited to an area of the galaxy where the Imperium has very little presence, while others are perfect for a wild frontier region. Therefore, the players concoct a chart they will roll on before each battle in order to determine which trait is to be used in that game (provided below for use in any campaign). In doing this, they decide not to use any War Zone Traits that represent inhabited worlds (such as the Hive Cities Trait) and just as importantly, they compare the descriptions of each environment to the terrain they have in their collections, deciding on the six most appropriate Traits.

Shadow Wars Beyond the Frontier – Random War Zone Trait Table

D6	Trait
1	Ferocious Storm
2	Burning Desert
3	Endless Forests
4	Seas of Fog
5	Unending Night
6	Bloodthirsty Flora

The Campaign in Action

The campaign begins with David winning the first Initiative roll-off and challenging for Strategic Dominance, the players imagining that the Blackshields are attempting to consolidate their control over the space lanes in the region they are seeking to claim as their haven. The game is a Challenge Shadow Wars mission fought in the midst of a Ferocious Storm, making for a dramatic start to the campaign. The result is a victory for the Traitors though, and so Stephen seeks to exploit his victory when he wins the next Initiative roll-off, making a play for Personal Glory (appropriate to an Emperor's Children war leader) and winning a Suicide Mission fought in a Burning Desert war zone. After two turns, the Traitors are in overall control of the region.

Turn three sees David's Blackshields make a play for Strategic Objective 3 – Deeds Endure, but he is unsuccessful in the Bad Blood Shadow War mission fought in the midst of a Sea of Fog. Reasoning that it is vital that he win the Initiative this turn, David spends 3 Reserves points to bolster his roll, and declares that the coming game will make use of the Vanguard preliminary mission. David wins the Initiative roll-off and decides to challenge for the Deeds Endure goal (Strategic objective 3) with a Bad Blood Shadow War mission, which is fought using the Unending Night War Zone Trait. The result is a first victory for David's Blackshields, and because he won, he earns back the Reserves points bid during the Mustering phase. David, earning his first Control point, puts the overall result at a draw, with just one Reserves point separating the two forces.

In turn five, David's luck continues as his Blackshields win a Suicide Mission in a Sea of Fog, fought over the Strategic Dominance goal at Strategic objective 1. This sets the Blackshields ahead in the campaign, but this is almost immediately reversed when Stephen challenges for Strategic Dominance himself, winning a Bad Blood Shadow War mission in the depths of a battlefield that was subject to the Bloodthirsty Flora Trait. Stephen continues his fightback in turn seven, where he challenges for Strategic Dominance again and once more wins, this game featuring a Hunter/Hunted mission fought during a Ferocious Storm.

With both sides running low on Reserves points, it is clear to David that he has to redouble his efforts if he is to have a chance of victory. In turn eight he wins the Initiative and challenges for Deeds Endure (Strategic objective 3) but is unsuccessful in the Challenge Shadow War mission that ensues, fought in a war zone subject to the Endless Forests trait. It appears for a spell that the gods of war have turned their faces away from the Blackshields when Stephen wins the next Initiative roll-off and challenges for Deeds Endure, using 2 Reserves points to bolster his position and playing a Vanguard mission prior to a Denial Shadow War mission fought upon a battlefield subject to the Unending Night Trait. This battle is both tense and bloody, but bolstered by his winning the Vanguard mission (his Blackshields sentries detecting the Sons of Horus kill team who attempted to strike at the heart of their defences in the depths of the night), he wins the main mission. At a stroke, David is just 1 Control point away from an overall draw and is ahead by 1 Reserves point, meaning that victory is yet a possibility and there is all to play for.

In what would prove the final turn if the Blackshields force met with defeat, David challenges for Personal Glory (Strategic objective 2), playing a Bad Blood mission in the depths of the burning desert in which the two forces had encountered each other back in turn two. The Burning Desert War Zone Trait special rules came into play in a way no such special rules had yet done, crippling several of Stephen's transport vehicles at a crucial moment and allowing David's more infantry-focussed Blackshields army to win a telling victory amidst the treacherous dune seas.

With both sides out of Reserves points, Control points are totalled. At the final counting, the Traitors had achieved the Strategic Dominance goal (Strategic objective 1), neither side had won the Personal Glory goal (both having 1 Control point at Strategic objective 2) and the Blackshields had secured the Deeds Endure goal (Strategic objective 3). With no clear winner to the campaign, ultimate victory would be decided by one more game, and because the players had not yet played the Shadow War mission 'The Noose', they decide to do so instead of rolling for a random mission. Having enjoyed the two previous games that used the Vanguard preliminary mission, Stephen and David agree that this final mission should feature one too. This raises the question of which side should be the Attacker and which the Defender, which would normally be decided by an Initiative roll-off in the Mustering phase of a campaign. The players agree that a Shadow War roll-off is the most appropriate way of deciding roles, which Stephen wins – the Emperor's Children and their Sons of Horus 'minders' would be the attackers, having run the Blackshields and their outcast leader down. Rolling for a War Zone Trait, the result is Ferocious Storm, a suitably dramatic backdrop to this final battle. The players agree that they would set the game on the desert world they had fought over previously, deciding that the storm is in fact a mighty sandstorm sweeping towards the Blackshields' landing zone and which has stopped them from escaping off-planet. Taking full advantage of their cornered foe's ill fortune, the Traitors strike.

The Vanguard preliminary mission proves extremely entertaining as well as tense for both players, and the Ferocious Storms special rule works very much in the Traitors' favour. The Traitor kill team, an Emperor's Children Legion Seeker Squad, conspires to attack in the direction of the winds, which slows the sentries whenever they attempt to move in the kill team's direction. The result of the Vanguard mission is a resounding victory for the Traitors, who strike from the sandstorm and slaughter the Blackshields sentries without mercy.

The Traitors' victory in the Vanguard Preliminary mission sets them in good stead for the main mission – The Noose. The players decide that instead of making a Shadow War roll-off to determine which would be the attacker seeking to slip the enemy's encirclement, this role would be fulfilled by the Blackshields, as this most suited the narrative context of the game. This meant that David would be seeking to move his forces towards an escape point on the table edge, but unfortunately for him, his troops would be forced to move against the oncoming wind in order to reach it.

Given the arduous conditions, David sees no alternative but to throw caution aside and advance his forces directly at their foes, gambling that in overwhelming the enemy, the Blackshields might break through their lines and sweep onwards towards the escape point. In the event, this tactic proved a costly but effective one and although fewer than half of David's squads broke through, this was sufficient to win victory.

Determining that the Blackshields had won, the players reasoned that the Emperor's Children had been informed by their Sons of Horus allies that the Warmaster demanded they return to the front lines to bolster the war effort against the Imperium. The Blackshields had slipped the Traitors' noose and were now free to carve their own domain deep in the void, far from the fires of Mankind's galactic civil war.

Special Mission – Vanguard Preliminary Mission

"One knife in the dark is worth a thousand swords at dawn."

Ancient Proverb

The scenario that follows is a special type of mission designed to be played as a preliminary stage before another, main mission. It is fought between two small forces – the Attacker's Kill Team and the Defender's Sentries, and as soon as it is resolved, the main mission is played. The result of the Vanguard mission directly affects the main mission, as explained below. The main battle is fought over the same terrain as the Vanguard, with the main armies arriving in its aftermath.

This Vanguard mission is best used in conjunction with the Shadow War missions presented in this section. However, it can be used in conjunction with almost any other mission the players wish to use, including the Age of Darkness core missions, the Eternal War missions presented in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook and the Age of Darkness Strategic Raids and Age of Darkness City Fight missions presented in *The Horus Heresy Book Four – Conquest*. It could even be used in conjunction with the Zone Mortalis missions in The Horus Heresy Books One and Three, although this may require some preparation and discussion on the part of the players.

The Vanguard mission identifies one player as the Attacker and the other as the Defender. Which player plays which role can be determined in a number of ways (such as the Shadow War roll-off in the Shadow War missions), chosen by the players or simply randomly determined via a roll-off. In addition, if the main mission is being played as part of a series of games in an ongoing campaign, it is likely that the roles of Attacker and Defender will already have been determined (such as when one player challenges another in the Mustering phase of a Conquest campaign). If the main mission to be played after the Vanguard mission also makes use of an Attacker and a Defender, the sides should retain their roles.

Before running through the set-up instructions that follow, the players will need to have determined the nature of the main mission, table edges and which deployment type is to be made.

The Armies

For the Vanguard mission, the Attacker must choose a single Troops, Fast Attack or Elites unit, to a maximum value of 200 points, as their saboteurs. The Defender takes a single Troops or Heavy Support unit worth up to 200 points as their Sentries. These units must have the Infantry type and may not be Immobile, Support Units or have Terminator armour of any type, or take a Dedicated Transport.

For the duration of the Vanguard mission, all models in these squads are counted as Independent Characters.

The Battlefield

The battlefield is set up according to the instructions for the main mission to be played. Depending on which objective is in use, it may be necessary to deploy a further terrain piece to represent a specific objective (see Reconnoitre).

Deployment

If the objective of the Vanguard mission calls for a marker or target to be placed in the Defender's deployment zone, this is placed first, by the player indicated in the Victory conditions that follow.

The Defender deploys their Sentries anywhere in the deployment zone defined by the main mission.

The Attacker's deployment zone is anywhere on the table within 6" of a table edge and not within 18" of a Sentry or objective.

First Turn

The Attacker has the first turn of the game.

Game Length

The game lasts until the Victory Conditions are achieved or one side is entirely wiped out.

Victory Conditions

There are several different objectives that can be played in the Vanguard mission, meaning that, combined with the main mission it is preceding, no two games need be alike. The Attacker chooses which is to be used.

Regardless of the specific Victory Conditions of the objective chosen, if all the members of the Kill Team are slain, the Defending side wins, and in the event of all the Sentries being killed, the Attacking side wins. In addition, if the number of Klaxon counters (as follows) in the Defender's pool ever exceeds 10, the Defender wins and automatically gets the first turn in the main mission, regardless of set-up instructions.

Sabotage: The Kill Team has been tasked with destroying a key element of the enemy's battlefield infrastructure, such as an augur tower or comms node. The target is represented by a small piece of terrain mounted on a 60mm round base or similar, or a counter if no suitable item is to hand, placed by the Defender anywhere in their deployment zone they wish. The Attackers must destroy the objective, which is counted as a stationary vehicle with an Armour value of 11 and a single Hull Point. Because the Kill Team is under orders to be certain the objective is destroyed thoroughly, it has a 4+ invulnerable save against any shooting attack or blast damage it might suffer.

The instant the objective is destroyed, the Attacker has won and play progresses to the main mission. If the Attacker wins, D6 Defending units (chosen by the Defender) must pass a Leadership test at the start of their first turn. If it is passed they may move, shoot, etc, normally, but if it is failed, they may only act as if they had just Regrouped. If the Defender wins, they may add +1 to any Reserve rolls in the main mission.

Assassination: The Kill Team has been ordered to eliminate a specific individual judged vital to the enemy's battle plan. Having lain in wait for hours or even days, the Kill Team strikes when the target is reviewing the front line defences. The Attacker may choose a single Independent Character or Character in the Defender's army and place it anywhere they wish in the Defender's deployment zone. The target is treated exactly like a Sentry and is activated or deactivated using the rules that follow. This target must be slain by the Kill Team before the end of the sixth Game Turn, at which point the target is called away to other duties and the chance to eliminate them is lost. Because the Attackers are under orders to be certain of the kill, the target has a 4+ invulnerable save against any shooting attack or blast damage, unless it already has a better invulnerable save than this.

The instant the target is removed as a casualty, the Attacker's side has won and play progresses to the main mission. In the event of the Attacking side winning, the target model is not available to the Defender in the main mission. If the Character was a member of a squad, that squad must begin the game in Reserves. If the Defender wins,

the target predicts the imminent main attack and automatically gets the first turn in the main game, regardless of the mission's set-up instructions.

Reconnoitre: The Kill Team has been tasked with assaying the enemy force's defences and plotting the lay of the land in preparation for the main assault that is to come. After both sides have deployed, the Attacker nominates a single piece of terrain that is in neither side's deployment zone and that is at least 18" from a table edge (such as a ruin, building, hill, area of woods, etc). If no such terrain is on the table, the Attacker may place one at this point.

In order to achieve its objective, at least one member of the Kill Team must remain within this piece of terrain, without moving, shooting or fighting in an assault for a full Game Turn. At the end of the Game Turn, the Attacker wins.

If the Attacker wins, they automatically get the first turn in the main mission and, in addition, any cover save provided by one fortification, building or piece of terrain in the Defender's deployment zone of the Attacker's choice is reduced by -1 (a 4+ cover save becoming 5+, for example). If the Defender wins, they may redeploy D6 units after both sides have deployed but before determining which side goes first (representing details of the enemy's movements and disposition becoming outdated).

Coup de Main: In this battle, the Kill Team is serving as the first wave in an imminent assault and its task is to eliminate the enemy sentries as quickly as possible so that following forces may press forward without opposition. The Attackers must kill all the Sentries before the Defender amasses 5 Klaxon counters. Whichever side reaches its goal first is the winner.

Survivors
Surviving Kill Team members and Sentries may be gathered together and fielded as normal squads by their respective sides in the main battle.

Such squads retain their battlefield role (Troops, Elites, etc) but are not counted towards the minimum or maximum number of such squads which the army can take.

The winner of the Vanguard mission automatically has the first turn in the main mission. In addition, in the event of the Attacking side winning, D6 of its units gain the Scout special rule in the main mission. If the Defender wins, all their Infantry models have the Shrouded special rule in the first Game Turn of the main mission.

Recovery: The Kill Team's mission is to recover a key item from the enemy, such as lost battle plans, a priceless relic or perhaps even a captive. A marker is placed by the Defender within their deployment zone and as close as possible to the centre of the table. The Attacker must recover this marker, using the rules for 'The Relic' given in the Eternal War mission of the same name in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook. The Kill Team wins the game if one of its models leaves the table (by simply moving off the table edge) while carrying the objective item.

The side who wins this mission earns an additional D3 Victory points at the end of the main mission.

Mission Special Rules

Under Cover of Darkness
The Attacker may always decide that their Kill Team is to be inserted into enemy territory under cover of darkness. If this option is chosen, the Night Fighting rules are in effect for the entire Vanguard mission. In addition, Night Fighting conditions continue into the main mission, where they are automatically in effect for the first Game Turn (representing the sun rising as the main assault commences).

Moving Sentries
At the beginning of each Game Turn, the Defending player may activate or deactivate up to D6 Sentries. Only activated Sentries can move, and it may prove handy to use counters to indicate which are active and which are inactive.

In the Movement phase of the Defending player's turn, each activated Sentry may move. Both players make a Control roll by rolling a D6 for each Sentry in turn. The player who scores highest moves the Sentry up to that many inches in a direction of their choice.

The Control roll is modified by the number of Klaxon counters the Defending player has accrued (as follows). Sentries can never move more than 6" regardless of their special rules, due to them moving with caution, and may never move off of the table. If the result of the Control roll is a draw (after taking into account any modifiers for Klaxon counters, etc), the Defending player moves the Sentry that number of inches.

Saboteurs roll for difficult terrain as normal, while Sentries, being familiar with the territory, ignore it.

Klaxon Counters
These simulate the alert level being raised and the sounds of battle drawing defenders in response. Each time a Sentry (activated or deactivated) comes within spotting range (its Initiative value plus the number of Klaxon points accrued, in inches) of a Kill Team member, it has spotted the intruders and becomes Aware.

Aware Sentries may act as normal from the start of their next turn; moving, shooting and assaulting under the Defending player's control for the rest of the Vanguard mission. Whenever a Sentry becomes Aware, for whatever reason, add a Klaxon counter to the Defending player's pool. Also add a Klaxon counter whenever a Kill Team member shoots (unless with a weapon with the Sniper special rule). Units that are Aware do not accrue further counters.

Each Klaxon counter the Defending player has accrued adds +1 to the Control roll for each Sentry as well as +1" to their spotting range. In this way, as the alert level is raised, Sentries will quickly move to investigate a reported intrusion and to reinforce their brothers-in-arms.

A Sentry cannot accrue more than one Klaxon counter per phase.

Conquest Campaign Appendix: Additional Strategic Objective Traits

The following Strategic Objective Traits work in the same manner as those provided in the core Conquest campaign system published in *The Horus Heresy Book Four – Conquest*. They are intended to provide additional options in games set in theatres of war other than the great salients of the Horus Heresy, and are therefore ideal for use in the Behind Enemy Lines type of campaign presented earlier in this section.

Each of these Traits represents a location that could be found more or less anywhere in the galaxy, but which is especially suited to battles set on the frontier of controlled space. They represent the sorts of structures that an occupying force would seek to secure, even if their defence was not of the very highest priority. An insurgent would look to attack such locations and bleed the occupier dry by a thousand cuts, thereby pinning down defence forces lest such objectives fall.

Refinery

The galaxy is host to a vast wealth of resources, most of which can be turned to supplying the wars of the Great Crusade. Even far from the leading edge of Mankind's expansion, planets visited by humanity may be host to minor resource exploitation operations, speculative drilling sites and the like. Though miniscule in comparison to the planet-razing open cast mines the Mechanicum might establish, such sites can prove of vital worth to an insurgent and must therefore be defended to keep them from falling into the wrong hands.

After terrain is set up and deployment zones determined, the side that controls this objective may place D3 Promethium Relay Pipes anywhere on the table. Details of this Fortification type are to be found in *Warhammer 40,000: Escalation*.

Listening Station

A world deemed of interest by an Expeditionary fleet or a Mechanicum Explorator mission might be marked for future exploitation, and it is common for listening stations to be set down before the fleet moves on. Tasked with gathering data on local conditions and monitoring for xenos intrusion, such sites form a small but vital link in a chain that might stretch across an entire sector of frontier space.

The side that controls this Strategic objective may force their opponent to re-roll Reserve rolls made for deep striking vehicles.

Fane of Old Gods

The galaxy has been visited by countless spiritual doctrines and the ruins of countless fanes are to be found strewn across a million worlds and more. Some were raised by human hands in the cold depths of Old Night, only to be cast down by the Imperial Truth with the coming of the Imperium, while others are ruins left behind by xenos empires that might have been extinct for aeons. A wise governor knows that such places should never be left unattended, for many are host to secrets that must not fall into enemy hands.

The Fane of Old Gods should be represented on the tabletop by a terrain type of the controlling player's choosing, positioned by them after all other terrain is placed and deployment zones have been determined. The fane can either be an area of ruins (counting as Rubble covering the appropriate area) or as a Medium-sized building with an Armour value of 12 and Access points and Fire points appropriate to the model. The side that does not control the Strategic objective makes all Leadership based tests at -1 when within 6" of the fane.

Ancient Shelters

Built centuries or millennia ago by long lost peoples seeking to survive the horrors of the rapidly approaching Age of Strife, these ancient shelters have survived the long years of Old Night largely intact. The dust which carpets their interior might be all that remains of their builders, but their walls are still strong and make ideal bases from which the forces of an insurgent or an occupier might operate, even in the harshest of planetary environments.

The side who controls this Strategic objective may place D3 shelter entrances on the table, after all other terrain has been placed and deployment zones determined. Each shelter is a small structure (a Vengeance Battery model without the turret weapon is ideal), with an Armour value of 14, one Access Point and no Fire Points. Because the bulk of the shelter is below ground, it has a Transport capacity of 30 models.

Archaeotech Hoard
Mere feet beneath the surface of this world is to be found the remains of some unimaginably advanced culture, whether a human society dating back to the lost Dark Age of Technology or some xenos strain of a similar level. There are those among the ranks of Traitor and Loyalist alike who will pay handsomely for such a resource, whether they intend to study it out of purely academic curiosity, sell it on to the highest bidder or mount it as a trophy to the glories of fallen peoples.

The side who controls this Strategic objective counts as having one additional Control point in the Consolidation phase, which the controlling player may assign to any Strategic objective they wish. Before doing so however they must roll a D6. On a 1, the hoard has played out and the above rule no longer applies to this Strategic objective, regardless of who controls it, for the remainder of the campaign.

Failed Expedition
The region being fought over was visited in the fairly recent past by a human expedition – perhaps a Rogue Trader Conquestor force or a Mechanicum Explorator mission. That expedition failed and the evidence of its demise is to be found scattered across the planet's surface in the form of crashed space craft, shattered cargo pods and other resources which a cunning insurgent could put to use.

The side who controls this objective may gather up resources by scavenging the remains of the Failed Expedition. This can be used to field an additional fortification choice in any game, worth up to 100 points. This fortification is chosen on top of any other choices in the army and does not take up a Force Organisation slot. Before the game begins however, the controlling player must roll a D6. On a result of 1, the building is unstable – roll a D6 on the Building Damage table in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

Legendary Mission: Conclave of the Lost

"Behind the proudly unfurled banner of Imperial Truth there ever lay the true foes waiting in ambush – superstition, irrationality, hatred and hubris."

Fahzon Sarrak, Remembrancer to the 113th Expeditionary Fleet

Conclave of the Lost is a Legendary Mission which recreates the coming together of scattered bands of Loyalists in answer to Nathaniel Garro's call to muster at Optera. At the height of the parley, the conclave was betrayed as Alpha Legion forces, scouring the Pale Stars for enemy forces, attacked. The disparate and distrustful Loyalists had no choice but to stand together, or else die together.

This mission can be played by mutual consent as part of the Retribution campaign, or simply as a one-off battle if players prefer. The nature of the Loyalist forces in the 'historical' battle (as presented in the Eye of the Storm chapter) make it an ideal opportunity to play a team game, especially if several smaller Loyalist forces can be combined and set against a larger Alpha Legion force. If only one Loyalist army is being used, it could be imagined that its leaders are awaiting the arrival of a potential ally and that the other parties to the conclave have yet to arrive at the time the Traitors attack, or have been waylaid and will never do so.

As ever, it is entirely possible to play this mission using any combination of armies available, in which case players are encouraged to imagine their own storyline leading up to the point of the Traitor force's attack.

The Armies

This mission is fought between forces of between 1,500 - 3,500 points per side. Armies are chosen as per the Age of Darkness rules. Ideally, the Loyalist side should include elements from two or more different Legions. This can be achieved by using an Allied Detachment, but is especially appropriate for use with the Shattered Legions Age of Darkness Theme as presented on page 202.

The Battlefield

The battle takes place in the depths of a barren wasteland or desert on an uninhabited frontier world far from the main battlefields of the Horus Heresy, and should therefore feature few, if any, buildings or artificial structures. If possible, the centre of the table should be dominated by a large plateau or flat-topped hill, and atop this are the ruins of the pre-human, alien structure which is to serve as the location of the conclave. This ancient alien temple could be represented using a Warhammer Arcane Ruins set if one is to hand, or could even serve as an opportunity to construct a unique item of centrepiece terrain especially for this game.

Aside from the ruined hilltop temple, the rest of the table should feature items of scatter terrain, large rocks, smaller pieces of ruined alien masonry and similar features, being the most appropriate for the setting.

Neither side should use any player-controlled fortifications in this battle.

Mission Special Rules

Reserves, Gathering of Heroes

Gathering of Heroes

All Loyalist HQ units deployed at the ruin at the start of the game have the Fearless special rule while within 6" of the centre of the table.

Deployment

Before deploying their forces, each player should first roll for their Warlord Traits and psychic powers where necessary.

- The Loyalist side places all of their HQ units within 6" of the centre of the table, within the bounds of the ruined alien temple. This may include Dedicated Transports, but models may not be embarked within them at deployment.
- The Loyalist player may, if they wish, place up to three Infantry units anywhere on the table that is not within 18" of the centre of the table and that is outside of the enemy deployment zone, representing friendly units deployed nearby to keep a watchful eye on the conclave.
- The remainder of the Loyalist army and all of the Traitor army are held in Reserve.
- The Traitor army may deploy Infiltrating units within their own deployment zone but not elsewhere, and the Loyalist side may not deploy using the Infiltrators special rule at all.

First Turn
The Traitor army gets the first turn – the Loyalist player may not roll to Seize the Initiative.

Game Length
This mission uses the rules for Variable Game Length.

Victory Conditions
The Traitors' mission is to wipe out the enemy's high commanders, taking advantage of the opportunity to do so while they are gathered at a single location. The Loyalists' primary goal is to survive the initial attack, after which they may seek to counter-attack and turn the tables on their hated foe.

Primary Objectives
The Traitor side earns 5 Victory points for killing the Loyalist Warlord within the first three turns of the game, and 3 Victory points for any other HQ model with the Independent Character special rule killed within this time. From the fourth turn onwards, only a single Victory point is earned for killing either type of model. In addition, the Traitor side earns 1 Victory point for each Loyalist unit it completely wipes out.

The Loyalist side earns 5 Victory points if by the end of the third turn its Warlord is still in play. In addition, the Loyalist side earns 1 Victory point for every Traitor unit it completely wipes out.

Secondary Objectives
None

Optional Mission Variant
If players wish, they can alter the Victory Conditions so that this mission can be used to represent not a meeting between potential allies belonging to the Legiones Astartes, but one between the commander of the Loyalist side and a third party – perhaps an agent, envoy or simply a hermit in possession of portentous wisdom vital to the war effort.

If this option is used, the Loyalist army deploys just its Warlord and if it has one, any attached unit (such as a Command Squad) in the ruined temple. In addition to this, the Loyalist player places a special model representing the individual that the army's commander is meeting, represented using the profile below.

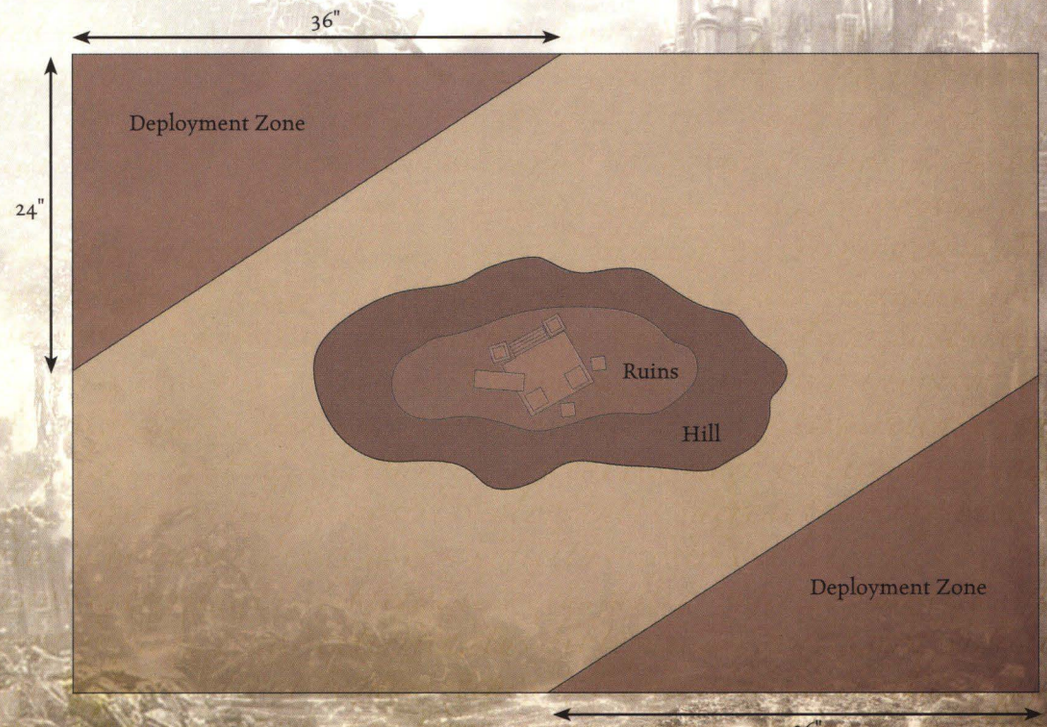
If this model survives the game, the Loyalist player earns an additional D6 Victory points; if it is killed, the Traitor side earns an additional D6 Victory points.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Envoy	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	9	4+

Type
- Infantry

Wargear
- Laspistol
- Close combat weapon

Special Rules
- Independent Character
- Fearless
- Fated (4+ Invulnerable save against shooting attacks)



Legendary Mission: Point of Desperation

"To conduct battle on two fronts is an act of either desperation or utter foolishness. In such an arena it is neither skill nor firepower that brings victory, but the ability to manipulate that of your enemy."

Codicil 19:23, The Writings of Roboute Guilliman

This Legendary Mission represents the fighting that occurred on the world of Desperation in the final days of 011.M31, as those scattered commands of Ultramarines long separated from Ultramar sought to eliminate the Night Lords fortress hidden on that remote world. This endeavour was made yet more perilous by the interference of an unknown third party, the Blackshields warband known as the Ashen Claw.

This mission involves three separate forces in a three-way engagement. It can be played with three separate players or teams of players, each taking a separate turn in sequence as in a standard game of Warhammer 40,000, or the Unknown and Unexpected special rules included in this mission can be used to dictate the actions of the third force. Historically, the battle involved elements of the 7th and 22nd Ultramarines Chapters, the Night Lords 14th Chapter and a force of the Ashen Claw; however, players should feel free to substitute whatever forces they feel most appropriate for their own enjoyment.

The Armies

For this mission, all players should assemble armies of between 1,500 - 3,000 points in value. If attempting to recreate the historical battle, one player should have a Primary Detachment of Legiones Astartes (Ultramarines) models based around Dreadnought Talons and Destroyer squads and should fight as Loyalists; one player should have a Primary Detachment of Legiones Astartes (Night Lords) fighting as Traitors; and one player should have a Primary Detachment of Legiones Astartes (Blackshields) fighting as neither Loyalist or Traitor (for rules that target either Loyalist or Traitor models, all models in this army count as both for the purposes of whether they can be targeted).

If one of the forces used is being controlled by the Unknown and Unexpected mission rules and not an actual player, then the points available to that force should be divided in two and each player should spend half of the available points on units to make up this third force. A neutral force constructed in this manner does not have to abide by the limits of any Force Organisation chart, but is simply made up of units selected by the players from a single army list.

The Battlefield

Representing the district of Desperation's primary hive, which surrounds the grand halls of the Armorium, the battlefield should be dominated by several large buildings. These can be intact or ruined as required by the available terrain pieces. One such building should be placed at the marked spot on the deployment map to serve as the main entrance to the Armorium. Other terrain should be a mixture of urban debris and smaller ruined buildings or wrecked vehicles.

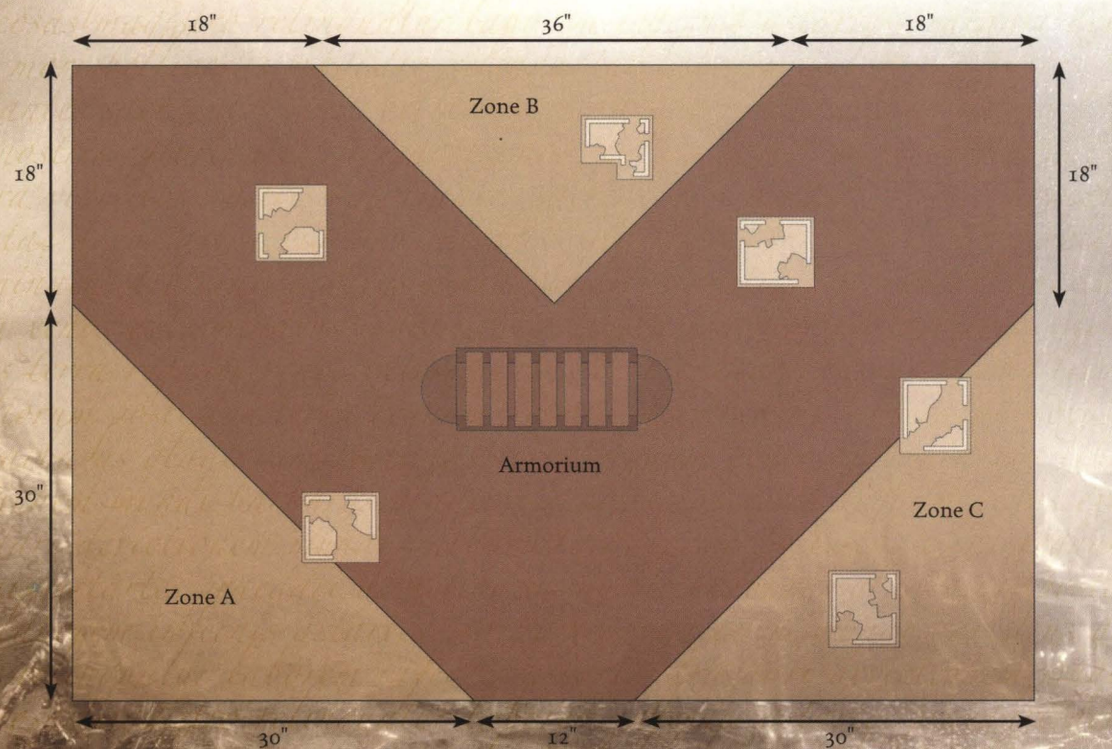
Mission Special Rules

Reserves, Unknown and Unexpected*, Armorium of Desperation.

**Use this mission special rule if only two players are involved in the scenario. For games where all three forces are controlled by separate players or teams of players, this rule should not be used.*

Unknown and Unexpected

All units selected as part of the army not under the control of a player are considered to have this special rule. These models are considered enemy models for the purposes of targeting by all models in both players' armies.



At the start of each player turn, beginning with the first turn, the player whose turn it currently is should roll a D3. That player may then select a number of units from amongst those with the Unknown and Unexpected special rule equal to the result of that dice roll – the player may not select any unit that was selected by the opposing player on the player turn that preceded the current turn unless there are no other units available. That player counts those units as under their control for the duration of that player turn only, with the proviso that if those units declare a Shooting attack or charge, they may not target another unit with the Unknown and Unexpected rule.

Armorium of Desperation
The Armorium of Desperation should be represented by ruins covering an area of at least 10" x 5", placed at the point marked on the deployment map. Models within the area of the Armorium gain a 4+ cover save and, due to the supplies of ammunition present, may re-roll all failed To Hit rolls of 1 during Shooting or Overwatch attacks.

Deployment
Before deploying their forces, each player should first roll for their Warlord Traits and psychic powers where necessary.

If one force is using the Unknown and Unexpected special rules, it should be deployed in a randomly selected deployment zone. The two players should then roll off, with the winner selecting a deployment zone from the remaining two and deploying their entire force, their opponent deploying in the remaining zone once they have finished. If all three forces are controlled by players then all three players should roll off, with the winner selecting a deployment zone and deploying their entire force. The remaining two players then roll off, with the winner again selecting an unused deployment zone and deploying their force and the final player deploying in the remaining zone.

First Turn
The player who deployed first takes the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative. In a game that includes three players, the players who set up second and third must roll off to see which of them may attempt to Seize the Initiative, with the player rolling highest being allowed to make the attempt.

Game Length
The game uses the Variable Game Length special rules.

Victory Conditions
In this mission, all of the forces operating within the primary hive of Desperation are seeking to control the Armorium, which was considered a prime objective by all due to its supplies of munitions, heavy weaponry, and the heavily fortified nature of the building itself. Victory will go to the player who manages to seize this facility and fend off their opponents long enough to claim it as their own.

Primary Objectives
Vital Strategic Importance: At the end of each Game Turn, the player who claims control of the Armorium gains 3 Victory points. A player is considered to control the Armorium if they have at least one unit within its bounds that is not fleeing and no enemy models are within the building. If no single player can claim uncontested control of the Armorium, then each player who controls at least one model that is not in a unit which is fleeing and is within the bounds of the Armorium, scores 1 Victory point.

Secondary Objectives
Slay the Warlord: If an enemy Warlord is slain, the player controlling the model that removed the Warlord as a casualty earns an additional Victory point. If the Warlord is slain in close combat by a HQ unit then the player scores two additional Victory points.

Overwhelming Force: If, at the end of the game, one player has more units than any other player remaining, not including units that are fleeing at the end of the last turn, then that player scores an additional Victory point.

Complete Destruction: If, during a single player turn, any given player completely destroys one or more units from each of the other two forces, that player gains an additional Victory point.

Legendary Mission: Between the Hammer and the Anvil

"The true test of courage comes between the hammer and the anvil; between victory and annihilation, where the truest metal shines brightest."

The Writings of Vulkan, Primarch of the Salamanders

Between the Hammer and the Anvil is a Legendary Mission set in the final hours of the Battle for Mezoa. Autilon Skorr and the elite of his Alpha Legion headhunters are trapped between the dogged guardians of Mezoa's inner forge-fanes and the onrushing horde of automata and Legiones Astartes led by Cassian Dracos, their only hope for survival to break through one of the enemy's fronts in order to escape before they are overwhelmed.

While this mission has been written to represent the specific narrative told in the Upon the Anvil of War chapter, players can use any combination of combatants they wish, for the Battle for Mezoa was but one among a hundred thousand battles fought during the dark days of the Horus Heresy.

The Armies

For this mission decide on a points value between 1,500 - 3,000 points. The Attacker chooses a force up to the agreed points value, while the Defender may select a force equal to a points value shown on the table below.

Points Values

For ease of use, the following table shows a quick breakdown of the points values that would be used by players in this mission. If the players wish to use a points total not shown on the table below, the Defender should use a total equal to roughly two-thirds of the Attacker's total:

Attacker's Points Total	Defender's Points Total
1,500	1,000
2,000	1,500
2,500	1,750
3,000	2,000

If following the specific details of the story, the Loyalist army should assume the role of Attacker and the Traitor army that of the Defender. The Attacker is intended to represent the forces rallied by Cassian Dracos and others of the Disciples of the Flame and the Mezoan defenders, while the Defender is the ragged remains of Autilon Skorr's raiding party.

After deciding on a points value and selecting armies, the Attacker must divide their force into three groups, each having roughly the same number of units. If playing a historical refight of the original battle, the Attacker should include Cassian Dracos, Xiaphas Jurr and Nârik Dreygur and build their force from Legiones Astartes Salamanders and Iron Warriors units or Mechanicum units representing the Mezoan priesthood. The Defending player should field only units of the Alpha Legion and should include Autilon Skorr as the army's Warlord. Neither side should take any fortifications.

The Battlefield

This mission takes place within the confines of Mezoa's towering central forge-fane, a structure of such monolithic proportions that it may be easily represented by a standard battlefield. Terrain for this game should focus on industrial buildings and machinery of obscure purpose, as well as wrecked vehicles, craters and devotional statuary dedicated to the Machine Cult. Players could also opt to represent the battlefield using Realm of Battle Zone Mortalis board sections, portraying one of the more confined areas of the forge-fane.

Mission Special Rules

Reserves, Burned Bridges, Bitter Flight, A Paragon of his Legion

Burned Bridges

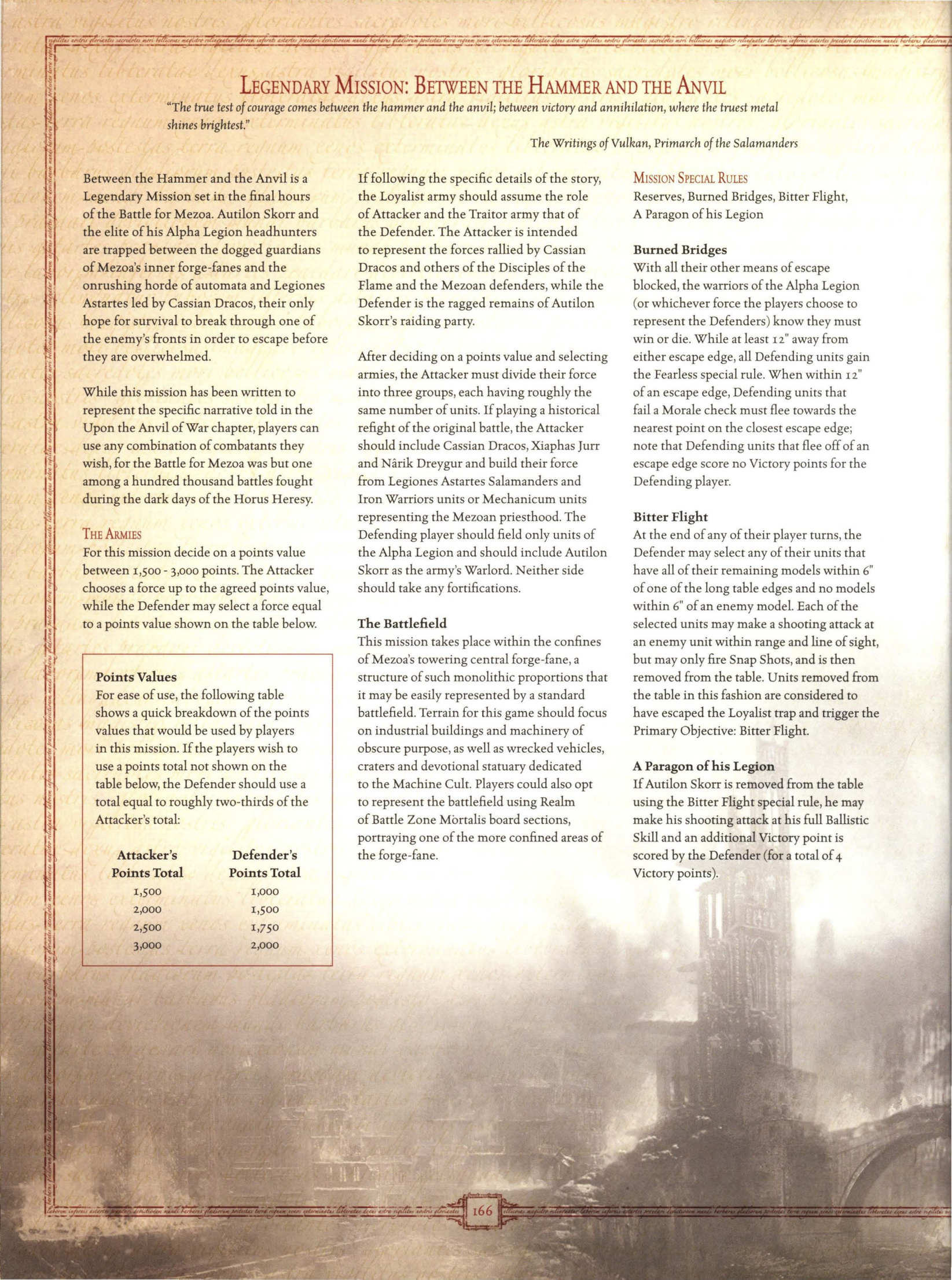
With all their other means of escape blocked, the warriors of the Alpha Legion (or whichever force the players choose to represent the Defenders) know they must win or die. While at least 12" away from either escape edge, all Defending units gain the Fearless special rule. When within 12" of an escape edge, Defending units that fail a Morale check must flee towards the nearest point on the closest escape edge; note that Defending units that flee off of an escape edge score no Victory points for the Defending player.

Bitter Flight

At the end of any of their player turns, the Defender may select any of their units that have all of their remaining models within 6" of one of the long table edges and no models within 6" of an enemy model. Each of the selected units may make a shooting attack at an enemy unit within range and line of sight, but may only fire Snap Shots, and is then removed from the table. Units removed from the table in this fashion are considered to have escaped the Loyalist trap and trigger the Primary Objective: Bitter Flight.

A Paragon of his Legion

If Autilon Skorr is removed from the table using the Bitter Flight special rule, he may make his shooting attack at his full Ballistic Skill and an additional Victory point is scored by the Defender (for a total of 4 Victory points).



Deployment

Before deploying their forces, each player should first roll for their Warlord Traits and psychic powers where necessary.

- The Attacker chooses one of the three groups their army is divided into and deploys all units in that group onto the table in either deployment zone A or B.
- The Defender deploys their entire force into deployment zone C, with no models deployed within 12" of an enemy model.
- The Attacker chooses one of the remaining two groups their army was divided into and deploys all units in that group to the deployment zone opposite the one occupied by the first group. All units must be deployed at least 12" away from any enemy models; if some units cannot be deployed, they must be placed into Reserve.
- The Attacker may now choose to attempt to deploy additional units from their remaining group to either of the two deployment zones. The Attacker may choose a single unit from their undeployed group and roll a D6. As long as the result is not a 1, they may deploy the chosen unit to the table in either deployment zone A or B, as long as it is not within 12" of an enemy unit. The Defender may roll a D6 as well. If their score equals or exceeds the Attacker's score, they may move D3 of their units up to 6" in any direction – this move may bring them within 12" of an enemy unit. Once the Attacker declines the opportunity to attempt to deploy additional units or fails the roll required, deployment ends.

First Turn

The Defender takes the first turn, unless the Attacker can Seize the Initiative as per the standard rules.

Game Length

The game uses the Variable Game Length special rules.

Victory Conditions

For the Loyalist forces, victory comes in the form of the complete destruction of the Traitors, while the Traitors seek to break through the Loyalist lines and escape. Victory is decided by Victory points, with the player scoring the highest total at the end of the final turn being the victor.

Primary Objectives

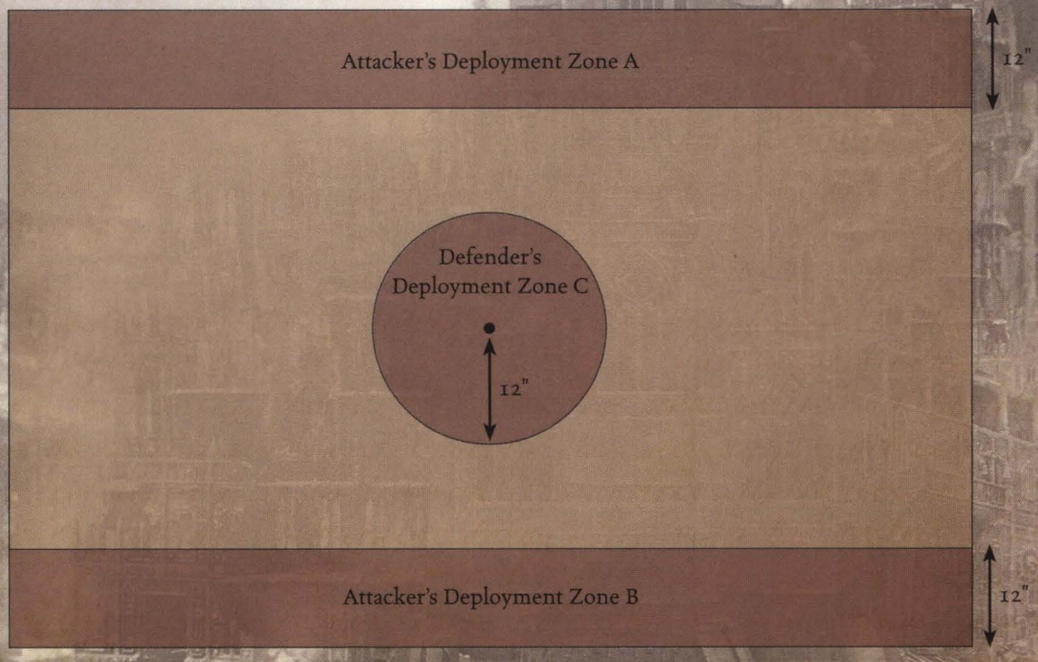
Vengeance in Blood (Attacker): The Attacker scores 1 Victory point for each enemy unit that is destroyed during the Shooting phase or Assault phase. The Attacker does not gain Victory points for any units that flee the battlefield.

Bitter Flight (Defender): Any Defending unit removed from the table using the Mission special rule Bitter Flight scores Victory points as noted on the table below:

Unit Type	VPs Scored
Troops	1
Elites	2
Fast Attack	2
Heavy Support	2
HQ	3
Lord of War	3

Secondary Objectives

Slay the Warlord (Attacker only): If the Attacker destroys the Defender's Warlord, that side earns an additional Victory point. If the Warlord is slain in close combat by one of the Attacker's HQ units then the Attacker scores 2 additional Victory points.



Legendary Mission: Slayer of Worlds

"This is the day; this is the hour…"

Shabran Darr
Last recorded vox transmission,
Isstvan III Atrocity

Slayer of Worlds is a Legendary Mission that recreates the destruction of the World Eaters fief world of Bodt at the orders of the Iron Hands warleader Autek Mor. The world and its defenders are doomed to utter ruin and so while the attackers could leave them to their fate, the Loyalists are pursuing a hidden goal more vital even than the defeat of their most hated enemy. For the attackers, victory lies in achieving this objective before the world's end comes, while the defenders are fighting not for their own survival, but for a still higher cause – their enemy's death.

This mission can be played as part of an ongoing campaign at the agreement of the players involved or can be undertaken as a one-off game should players wish. While it is written to represent the specific narrative told in the Tooth and Claw chapter, players can of course use any combination of combatants they wish, for Bodt was not the first world to meet its end during the calamitous years of the Age of Darkness and would certainly not be the last.

The Armies

This mission is fought between forces of between 2,000 - 3,000 points per side. Armies are chosen as per the Age of Darkness rules. If following the specific details of the story presented in Tooth and Claw chapter, the Loyalist army should assume the role of Attacker and the Traitor army that of the Defender. The 'historical' event this mission recreates saw a Loyalist Iron Hands force allied to Imperial Fists and the Solar Auxilia attack a World Eaters army allied to a Traitor Mechanicum force and an army of mortal gun-clanners (for which the Imperialis Militia and Warp Cults army list presented in *The Horus Heresy Book Five – Tempest* is an ideal basis). Note however that it is not strictly necessary to use a mixed force, as the battle being played could represent one clash of forces among many that took place in the hours before Bodt's death.

The Attacker may not field any fortifications in this battle.

The Battlefield

Autek Mor's attack on Bodt was focused on its primary city, Tredecimmia, and the terrain can be set up to represent a range of possible zones in and around the region from the crater-strewn rad wastes across which the feral gun-clanners roamed to the landing pads, storage silos and barracks at its heart. In between these zones are rings of heavy fortifications, making the use of defence lines and bunkers especially appropriate.

Mission Special Rules

Reserves, This is the Way the World Ends, Meatgrinder

This is the Way the World Ends

At the beginning of Game Turn 4 and every Game Turn thereafter, roll a D6 and add the turn number to the result. If the total is 10 or more, the death of the planet is imminent and the game will finish at the end of that Game Turn.

Meatgrinder

Knowing that the end is nigh, both sides in this apocalyptic clash have committed every last reserve to the battle. Troops units that are entirely wiped out are placed in Ongoing Reserves and may re-enter using the Outflank special rule. Units that are Falling Back and which are at 25% or less of their starting strength in models may be removed at the end of their owning player's turn and be returned as above, being put back into play at their full starting strength.

Deployment

Before deploying their forces, each player should first roll for their Warlord Traits and psychic powers where necessary.

- Roll off. The winner may choose to deploy first or second.
- The player who deploys first deploys their entire force (except any units held in Reserves) into their deployment zone.
- The opposing player deploys their entire force (except any units held in Reserves) into their own deployment zone.

First Turn

The player who deployed first also has the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative.

Game Length

The game finishes at the end of the turn indicated by the This is the Way the World Ends special rule.

Victory Conditions

The victory conditions in this mission are unusual in that the defending force is doomed to destruction regardless of the result of the battle—for them, victory lies in foiling their attackers' objectives rather than attaining their own. Until the moment the planet's doom looms over the battlefield, both sides are intent upon other objectives, but as the skies begin to burn, they look only to shedding the blood of the enemy. For the attackers, victory lies in holding off the enemy while their master descends into the macro silos beneath Tredecimmia in pursuit of his own objective. Their only concern is to buy time for Autek Mor to complete his mission, even should they die in the process.

To represent the unique circumstances of this battle, both sides share the same Primary Objective, but have different Secondary Objectives, as stated below. Only Victory points earned in the final turn of the game are counted. It may be necessary to place casualties caused in the final turn away from those caused in earlier turns, as only these are counted towards certain objectives (such as Attrition).

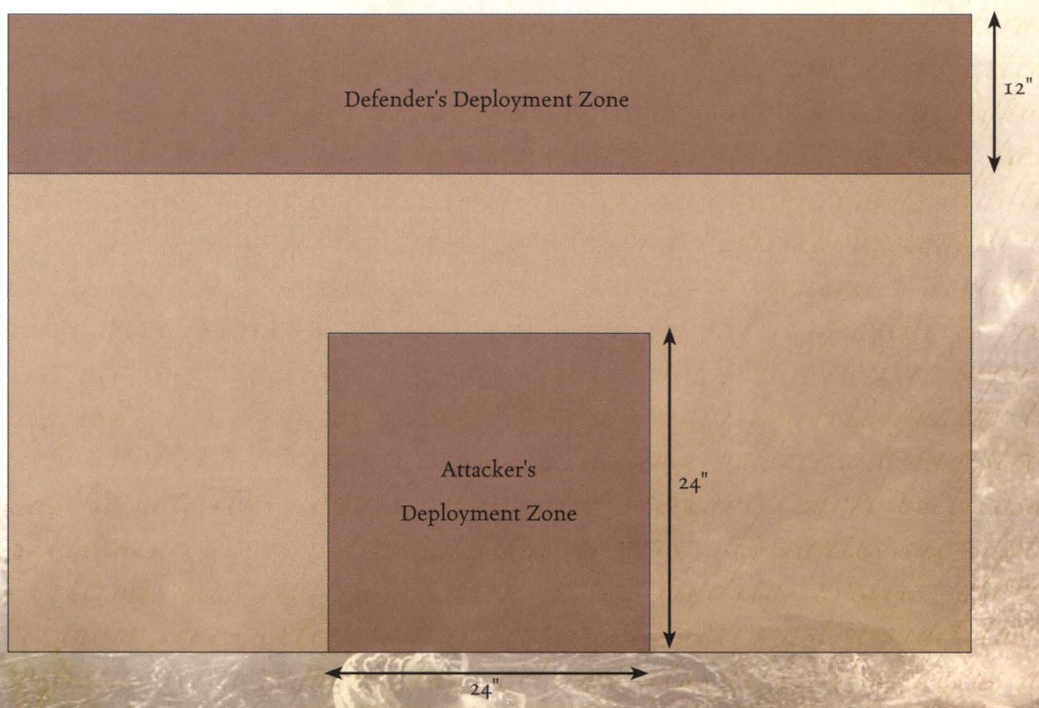
Primary Objectives

Death Toll (both sides): Each side gains 1 Victory point for each enemy unit they destroy in the final turn or which is Falling Back at the end of the game.

Secondary Objectives

Attrition (Defender only): If the Defender destroys more enemy units in the last turn than the Attacker does, they earn an additional Victory point.

Slay the Warlord (Attacker only): If the Attacker destroys the Defender's Warlord in the last turn of the game, that side earns an additional Victory point.



Shadow Wars in the Age of Darkness

"Once I had a Father, once I had brothers, once I had a Legion, now all I have is hate. But my hate shall swallow the stars themselves before it is sated."

Raval Sult
Once of the Iron Hands

Updated Rules for the Battles in the Age of Darkness Warhammer 40,000 Expansion

The Battles in the Age of Darkness expansion is a narrative framework and series of different, interlocking campaign systems for games of Warhammer 40,000 set in the deadly milieu of the Horus Heresy with its own special rules, missions and style of play. It presents its own distinct way of playing based on the armies which fought each other for control of the nascent Imperium and the battles which decided Mankind's fate in this dark age of war.

Battles in the Age of Darkness games should be treated as an expansion to the core game which use all of the core rules presented in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook except where noted in this précis of general rules, and where shown in the various campaign rules found in the Horus Heresy volumes themselves. These changes take precedence over the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook where exceptions to the rules found there are made.

Army Selection/ Force Organisation Charts

Battles in the Age of Darkness games as shown in our existing Horus Heresy volumes and this book use their own missions and special core Force Organisation charts, as well as special optional charts. These replace the standard Battle-forged army system which is presented in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook and are intended to be used in conjunction with the missions and campaign systems found in Forge World's Horus Heresy volumes and the core Battles in the Age of Darkness missions that are provided here. Specific formations, detachments, etc, which are not found in the Horus Heresy volumes should not be used in Battles in the Age of Darkness games.

Each Battles in the Age of Darkness army is composed of a single Primary Detachment, and may also contain a number of optional (Secondary) Detachments as shown on the relevant Force Organisation chart.

Unless specified by a particular mission, all of the units which are chosen as part of the Primary and Lords of War Detachments must be from the same army list and same Faction (in the case of a Space Marine Legion, they must also have the same version of the Legiones Astartes special rule as well where this is relevant).

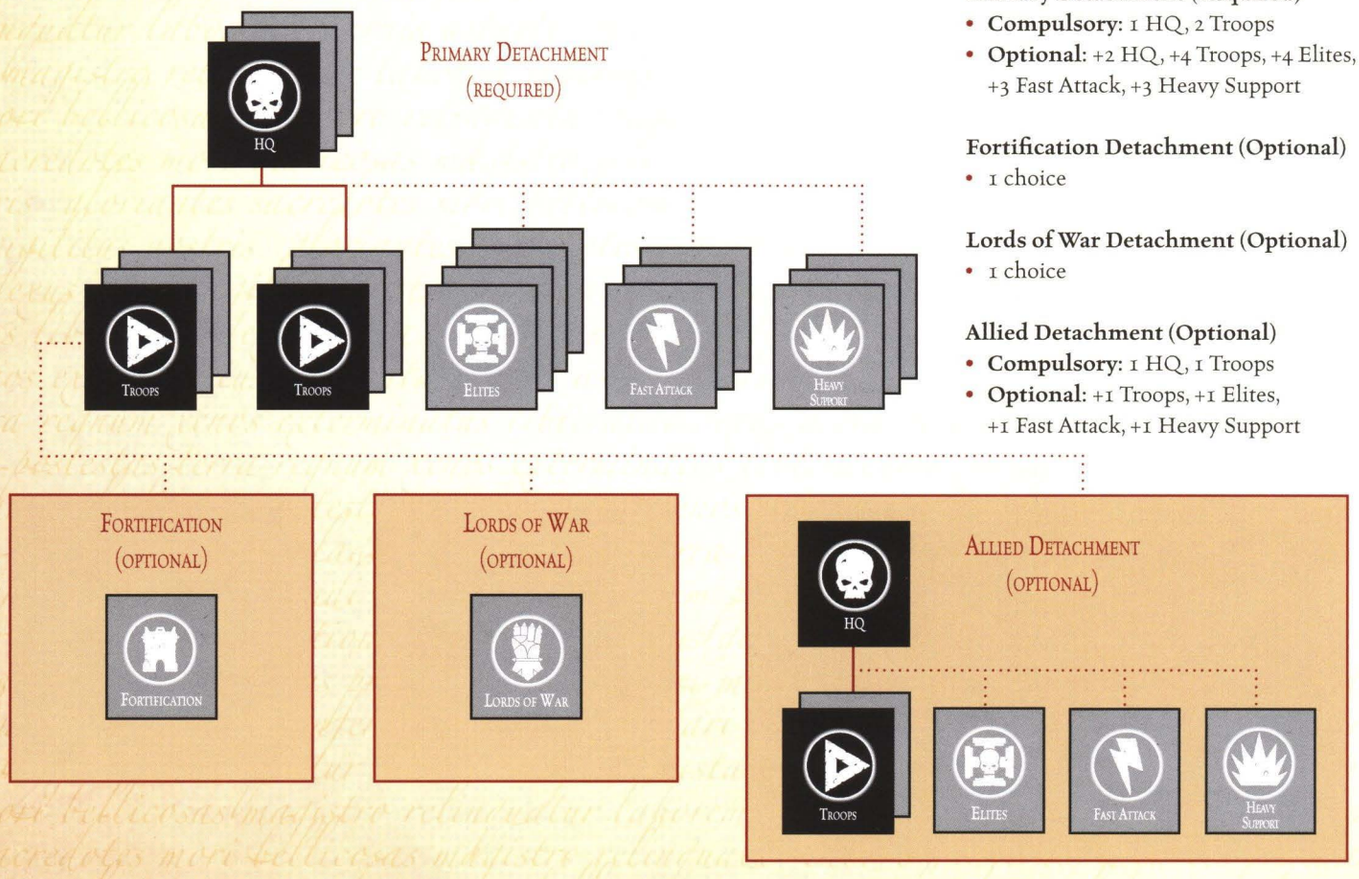
Allied Detachments should be chosen according to the Allies in the Age of Darkness chart and be of the same Faction (see *The Horus Heresy Book I – Betrayal* or the *Legiones Astartes Crusade Army* book).

Fortification Detachments may be chosen from any Imperial-type fortifications shown in the *Warhammer 40,000: Stronghold Assault* expansion, as well as those in Forge World's Imperial Armour and Horus Heresy books. The rules found in the *Stronghold Assault* expansion should be used where possible.

Scoring Units

Unless specified in a particular mission, in Battles in the Age of Darkness games, only units taken as Troops choices and those specifically noted in their entries (other than Dedicated Transports) are counted as scoring units (unless they are Falling Back). They may only score Victory points for objectives if present within 3" of that objective so long as enemy scoring and denial units are not also present in this radius.

Battles in the Age of Darkness Force Organisation Chart



Primary Detachment (Required)
- **Compulsory:** 1 HQ, 2 Troops
- **Optional:** +2 HQ, +4 Troops, +4 Elites, +3 Fast Attack, +3 Heavy Support

Fortification Detachment (Optional)
- 1 choice

Lords of War Detachment (Optional)
- 1 choice

Allied Detachment (Optional)
- **Compulsory:** 1 HQ, 1 Troops
- **Optional:** +1 Troops, +1 Elites, +1 Fast Attack, +1 Heavy Support

Denial Units
All other units in the game which are not scoring units, other than Immobilised or currently Falling Back units, Zooming Flyers/Super-heavy Flyers or Swooping Monstrous Creatures/Gargantuan Monstrous Creatures, are counted as denial units. This means that if they are present within the listed scoring range of an objective, an opposing unit cannot score Victory points from the objective or claim it.

Size of Battle
A points total of around 1,750-3,500 points per player is an ideal game size for use with the Battles in the Age of Darkness rules, with games of 2,000-2,500 points allowing for a battle that should take two to three hours. Battles of a considerably larger size may benefit from using the *Warhammer 40,000: Apocalypse* expansion, or standard sized games can be played using the rules found in the Choosing Your Army section of the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook instead. Smaller games may benefit from the use of an alternative Force Organisation chart such as that provided by the Zone Mortalis rules found in *The Horus Heresy Book Three – Extermination* or Forge World's rules download available from our website.

Factions in the Age of Darkness
The Factions system found in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook is not used in conjunction with the Battles in the Age of Darkness expansion. Instead, during the Horus Heresy there are in effect only two Factions: Loyalist and Traitor, and an army's forces must be chosen from one or the other of these (but never both). In the various Age of Darkness army lists, certain characters and units will either be specified in their text or are marked with either an Aquila (Loyalists) or the Eye of Horus (Traitors), meaning that they can only be chosen by armies of that Faction. If a character or unit is shown without one of these marks or specification, they may be selected by either Faction.

Designer's Note: Other Force Organisation charts (as well as formations and detachments) from the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook and other game expansions, as well as Unbound armies, are not designed with the Age of Darkness missions in mind and should not be used in Battles of the Age of Darkness games, unless by the mutual prior consent of all the parties involved. Note that using Unbound armies, etc, can be a great deal of fun and make for a range of interesting options, but will likely throw up rules anomalies and inconsistencies between play styles and the close narrative framework and systems of the Horus Heresy campaign rules, so caveat emptor!

Warlords
In a Battles in the Age of Darkness game, each army must have a Warlord selected from its Primary Detachment. Unless specified by a unit special rule or Force Organisation chart rule to the contrary, this must be chosen from among the army's character models with the highest Leadership values by the owning player.

Special Characters
The various Horus Heresy-era army lists contain special characters for the Loyalists and Traitors. Each of these special characters is unique, so a player cannot include multiples of the same special character in an army, and if playing in team games, they should not be duplicated if possible across a single side. Special characters roll for their Warlord Traits as normal unless noted in their profile.

Psychic Powers in the Age of Darkness
During the latter days of the Imperium's Great Crusade and the early wars of the Horus Heresy, the secrets of Malefic Daemonology were known to only a select few, and the grasp of the Ruinous Powers on the galaxy had waned. As a result, unless specifically noted in their entry, Malefic Daemonology psychic powers are not available to any model with psychic powers.

The following units found in our previously printed Horus Heresy books have access to Malefic Daemonology:

- Space Marine Librarians with the Legiones Astartes (Word Bearers) special rule.
- The Primarch Lorgar, but only when using the Lorgar Transfigured upgrade.

Lords of War

In a Battles in the Age of Darkness game of 2,000 points or greater, Lords of War choices will be available to an army based upon the specific Force Organisation chart being used. Unlike the use of Lords of War in the core Warhammer 40,000 game, the use of Lords of War is restricted. These choices must be bought from the army's points total as normal, and may not make up more than 25%* of the army's total points cost for each Lords of War choice, unless specified as being otherwise by the mission that is being played. Lords of War are only available to an army's Primary Detachment.

**The 25% rule: This means that the maximum points value of a single Lords of War choice in a Battles in the Age of Darkness game for some common army sizes is as follows:*

- 2,000 points – 500 points
- 2,250 points – 563 points
- 2,500 points – 625 points
- 2,750 points – 688 points
- 3,000 points – 750 points
- 3,250 points – 813 points
- 3,500 points – 875 points

Battles in the Age of Darkness Secondary Mission Objectives

The following is a summary of the main additional Secondary Objectives used in Battles in the Age of Darkness missions. Which particular Secondary Objectives are to be used will be listed in the mission that is being played.

Slay the Warlord
If a side destroyed the enemy Warlord, they gain an extra Victory point.

Last Man Standing
The side with the greatest number of surviving units at the end of the game gains an extra Victory point.

Attrition
The army which has destroyed the highest number of enemy units at the end of the game gains an additional Victory point.

The Price of Failure (Lords of War Secondary Objective)
Where this Secondary Objective is used in a scenario, destroying an enemy Lords of War choice always represents a Secondary Objective in the game.

This Secondary Objective is worth 2 additional Victory points to the destroying side in the case of an Engine of Destruction, Great Beast or Primarch, or 1 additional Victory point each per vehicle/creature in the case of War Machine Detachments, Monstrous Hordes and Sub-orbital Strike Wings. See the various Horus Heresy era army lists for more information on these types of Lords of War.

BATTLES IN THE AGE OF DARKNESS SHADOW WARS MISSIONS

The following six missions represent the bitter wars of retribution and hatred fought in the shadows between vengeful groups of outcasts or lost Legiones Astartes throughout the Age of Darkness. The missions represent encounters between two such forces, each seeking to catch the other unawares and to strike the killing blow in an ongoing campaign of vengeance.

In most of these missions, the players are required to roll off in order to establish one side as the Attacker and the other as the Defender, representing the former side gaining an immediate, short-term tactical advantage over the latter which they aim to exploit in the battle itself. This is distinct from the Battles in the Age of Darkness core missions, which feature battles between two forces fighting on an equal tactical footing, or the Battles in the Age of Darkness Strategic Raids missions presented in *The Horus Heresy Book Four – Conquest*, in which one side is a dedicated, defensive garrison army and the other a fast-moving raiding force.

While these missions exemplify the bloody conflicts fought throughout the Age of Darkness by bitterly opposed outcast Legiones Astartes groups isolated from their parent Legions, they can still be played even if one or neither force is drawn from the Legiones Astartes. The Horus Heresy saw every institution of the mighty Imperium sundered and so rival Mechanicum Taghmata, Solar Auxilia or even Imperialis Militia might very well be fighting such wars.

Victory Conditions

For Hatred's Sake: The battles of the Shadow Wars were bitter-fought and hateful, and often a man might be slain, yet in his dying moments count himself the victor. For this reason, the Sudden Death Victory special rule presented in the Preparing for Battle chapter of the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook is not used in Shadow Wars missions. Should one side be entirely wiped out or have no models on the table at the end of a Game Turn, the game ends and Victory points are calculated to determine which side wins.

Selecting a Mission

Having selected your armies for fighting the battle, determine which Age of Darkness mission you will be playing. This may be done either by mutual agreement or by randomly rolling for the mission on the following table:

Mission Table

D6	Mission
1	Hunter/Hunted
2	Bad Blood
3	Denial
4	Suicide Mission
5	Challenge*
6	The Noose

**The victory conditions of this mission make it very difficult to win if one side is fielding a Knights Questoris army. Therefore, if this mission is rolled, the other player in such a match-up may decide that a different mission be rolled for.*

Placing Terrain

After you have determined what mission you are playing, you must then place terrain from your collection on the battlefield. Terrain may be placed by the simple expedient of each player taking turns to place an individual piece or so that they form an attractive battlefield, and these can be themed in 'sets' (a power generator and industrial buildings, etc) or simply placed roughly evenly across the table and then randomised via the use of a Scatter dice and 2D6. For ease of play, try to leave a gap of at least 2" between each discreet area of terrain to allow the clear passage of infantry models.

Depending on which mission you are fighting, this may also have specific instructions on the terrain and its set-up. In addition, if you are playing through a particular campaign, you may have a certain style of terrain or special rules you can use to further theme your battlefield (such as the Isstvan III battlefield terrain rules found in *The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal*).

Determine Deployment Map

After the terrain has been set up, you must determine each player's deployment zones.

First, the deployment map is determined. This may be done either by mutual agreement or by randomly rolling on the Deployment Map table below.

Unless stated otherwise in the mission's set-up instructions, once the deployment map has been decided on, the players should roll off. The winner of the roll-off selects one of the deployment zones to be theirs, and their opponent then takes the opposite deployment zone.

Deployment Map Table

D6	Deployment Map Type
1	Clash of the Line
2	Dawn of War
3	Search and Destroy
4	Hammer and Anvil
5	Ambush!
6	Vanguard Strike

Shadow Wars Secondary Objectives

In addition to the Secondary Objectives common to many Age of Darkness missions, as well as the Primary Objectives detailed in each mission, Age of Darkness Shadow War missions make use of a number of Secondary Objectives unique to this particular form of warfare. Each mission includes one or more of the following:

Demonstration of Power: The leaders of the many outcast, orphaned and renegade Legiones Astartes forces operating across the galaxy throughout the Age of Darkness led by brutal example, demonstrating their right to command by the defeat of their enemies by their own hand. Each enemy character killed in a Challenge earns the side that killed them an additional Victory point.

Execution: For the Space Marines operating far from their Legions, vengeance was often the only succour they could call upon in a galaxy seemingly turned against them. Each enemy unit wiped out by a Sweeping Advance earns the side that wiped it out an additional Victory point.

Despoilers: Scattered far and wide and divorced from conventional supply lines, many outcast elements had to scavenge weapons, ammunition and other supplies from amongst the detritus of the very battlefields across which they fought their bitter wars. Each scoring unit that ends the game within an intact building or with at least one model in base contact with an Ammunition Dump (see Battlefield Debris in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook) earns that unit's side an additional Victory point.

The Shadow War Roll-off

Age of Darkness Shadow War missions represent clashes between bitterly opposed enemies hunting one another through the war-torn reaches of the galaxy. Each side is seeking to gain sufficient tactical advantage to 'get the drop' on their enemy and launch a decisive strike against them. To represent the unseen hunt that precedes the actual battle and to ensure it has an effect on the mission itself, Age of Darkness Shadow War missions make use of a special rule called the 'Shadow War roll-off'. This roll determines which of the two sides has the immediate tactical advantage in the mission, determined as follows.

In order to make the Shadow War roll-off, both players roll 2D6, modified in the following manner. The effect of the roll-off varies by mission, but typically the player who wins the roll-off may decide whether to be the Attacker or the Defender in the coming battle.

Vigilator Consul in army	+1
One or more Legion Recon Squad in army	+1
One or more Super-heavy vehicle in army	-2

Warlord has:

Legiones Astartes (Dark Angels)	-
Legiones Astartes (Emperor's Children)	-
Legiones Astartes (Iron Warriors)	-1
Legiones Astartes (White Scars)	+1
Legiones Astartes (Space Wolves)	+1
Legiones Astartes (Imperial Fists)	-
Legiones Astartes (Night Lords)	+1
Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels)	-
Legiones Astartes (Iron Hands)	-
Legiones Astartes (World Eaters)	-1
Legiones Astartes (Ultramarines)	-
Legiones Astartes (Death Guard)	-
Legiones Astartes (Thousand Sons)	-
Legiones Astartes (Sons of Horus)	-
Legiones Astartes (Word Bearers)	-
Legiones Astartes (Salamanders)	-
Legiones Astartes (Raven Guard)	+2
Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion)	+2
Legiones Astartes (Blackshields)	+1

Deployment Maps

1. Clash of the Line

Clash of the Line has two opposing arrowhead-shaped deployment zones. When deploying in either of these zones, no unit can be deployed within 12" of the centre of the table during standard deployment.

The player's own table edge is the narrow edge which forms the rear of their 'arrowhead'.

2. Dawn of War

If players are using the Dawn of War deployment map, the board is divided into two equal halves across its length.

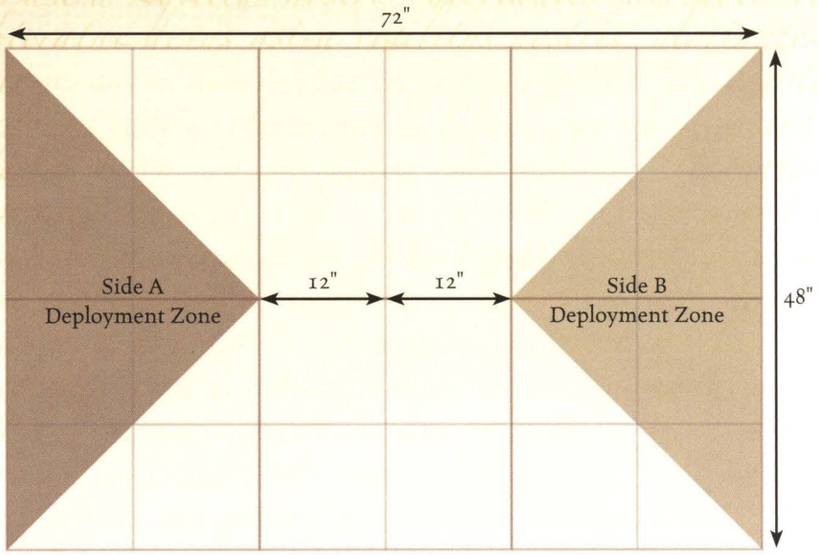
For Dawn of War battles, a player's table edge is the long table edge touching their own deployment zone.

3. Search and Destroy

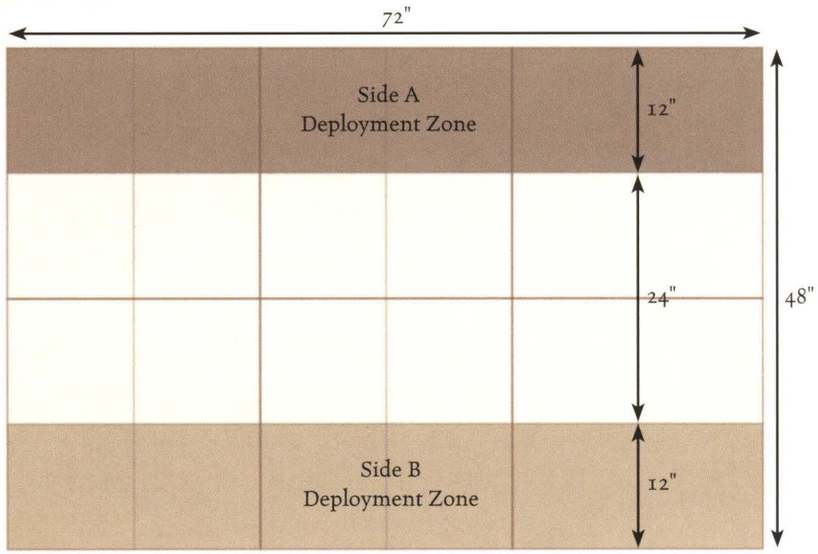
The Search and Destroy deployment map divides the table into four equal quarters. Each quarter constitutes a deployment zone. Units may not be deployed into the circular 18" diameter area at the centre of the table.

A player's table edges are any which form part of their deployment area.

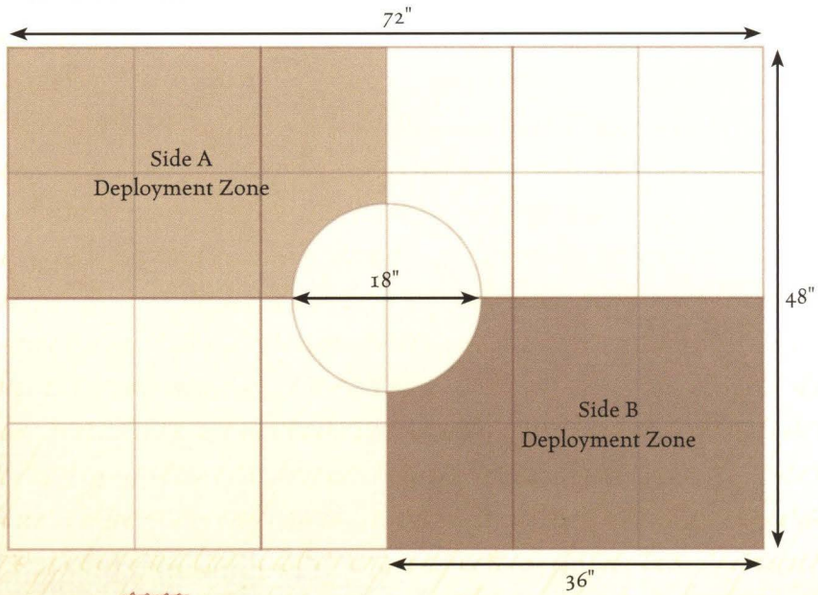
Clash of the Line



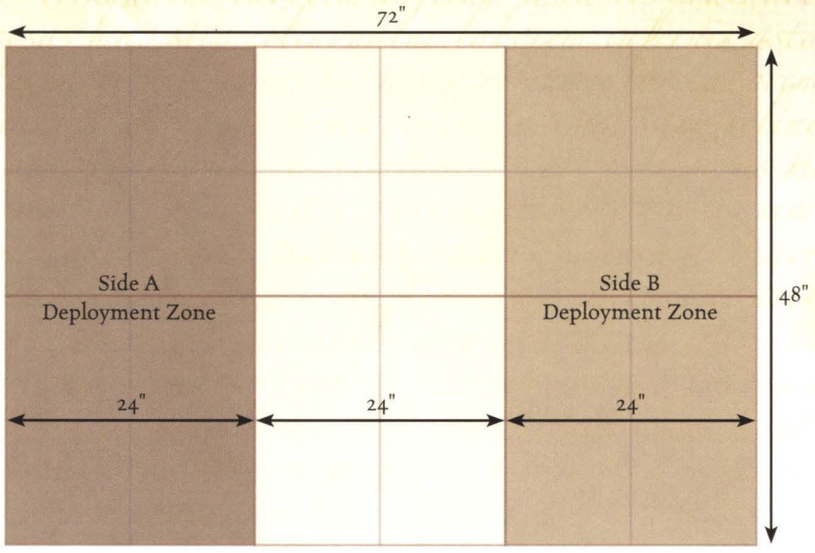
Dawn of War



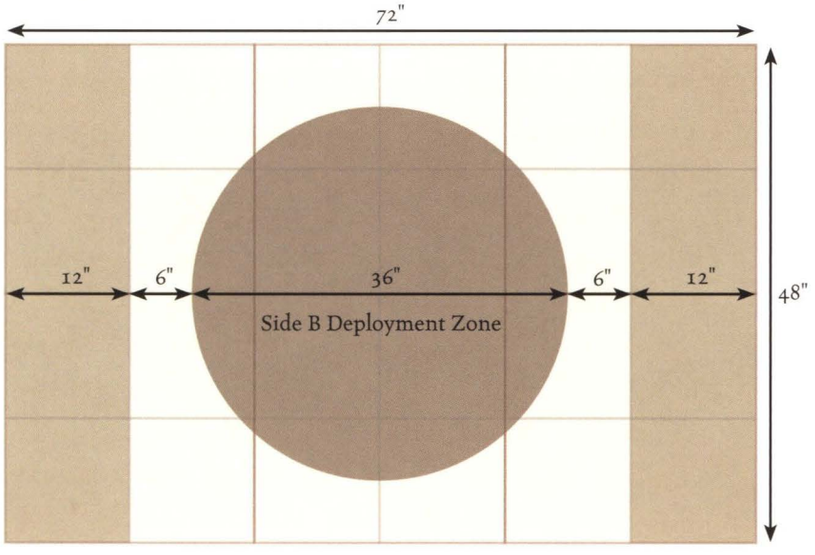
Search and Destroy



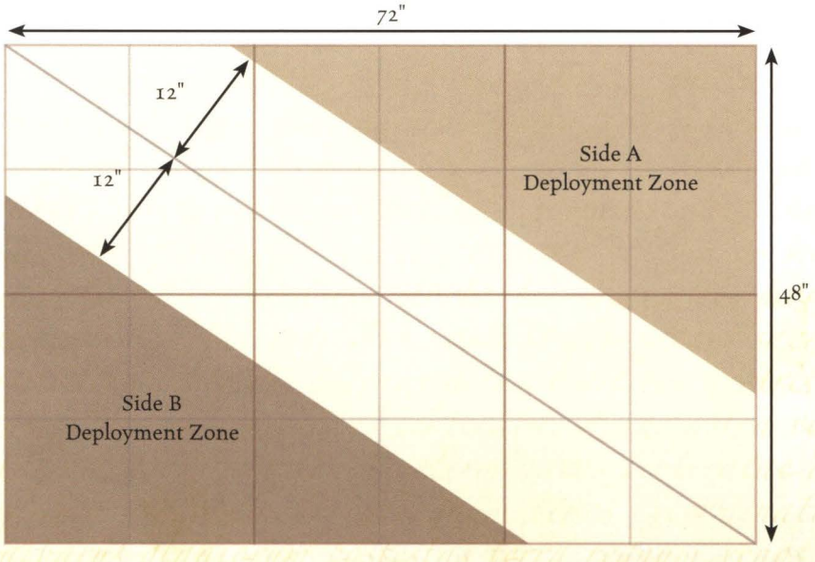
Hammer and Anvil



Ambush!



Vanguard Strike



4. Hammer and Anvil
If players are using the Hammer and Anvil deployment map, the table is divided into two equal halves across its width.

For Hammer and Anvil battles, a player's table edge is the short table edge touching their own deployment zone.

5. Ambush!
The Ambush! deployment map divides the table into three areas: a central defender's area (representing the force being ambushed) and two deployment areas on the narrow table edges which are both available to the opposing player, representing the 'attacking' forces that have set up the ambush.

The player winning the roll-off may opt to take the part of the Attacker or the Defender, and their opponent then takes the opposing deployment type.

The narrow table edges are the Attacking player's, while the long table edges are the Defending player's (with any of the Defender's Reserves entering by the long edges, representing reinforcements rushing to relieve the ambushed force).

6. Vanguard Strike
If using the Vanguard Strike deployment map, the board is divided into two equal halves across its diagonal. The players then agree which diagonal deployment zone each will play or can instead randomise to decide.

For Vanguard Strike battles, a player's table edge is the long table edge that touches their own deployment zone.

Mission 1 – Hunter/Hunted

"It is notable that in all these bitter wars we fought far from the eyes of the great lords, we were rarely forced to suffer the presence of witnesses or remembrancers. We were our own witnesses, accountable only to our own consciences, and that fact above all others dictated the nature and the outcome of our battles."

Legionary Sethanic, Legiones Astartes Imperial Fists

In this mission, two rival groups of outcast Legiones Astartes are stalking one another far from the frontlines of Mankind's galactic civil war. This deadly game of hunter and hunted has switched back and forth numerous times, but now the two mortal foes close upon one another, each seeking to strike the killing blow and thereby win the Shadow War.

The Armies

Choose the armies using the Battles in the Age of Darkness rules and Force Organisation charts.

Setting Up The Game

- Set up terrain for the battlefield.
- Determine the deployment map.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.
- Before the game begins, both players should divide their forces into two roughly equal groups based on the number of units (but not including player-owned fortifications). They must then decide which of these two forces is to be their Hunter force and which is to be their Reserve. This arrangement represents each force fielding a vanguard of hunters to locate and isolate the enemy's own hunters so that their main body can be brought to bear.

Deployment

- Make a Shadow War roll-off as described on page 175. The winner may decide that the Night Fighting special rule is in play for the first D3 Game Turns. This special rule takes precedence over any other ability a force might have to impose Night Fighting on a mission, such as the Night Lords Cover of Darkness special rule.
- Roll off. The winner may choose to deploy first or second.
- The player who deploys first selects their deployment zone and then deploys their Hunter force, as well as any fortifications they possess into their deployment zone. The other half of their army remains in Reserve.
- The player who is deploying second then deploys their Hunter force, as well as any fortifications they possess into their deployment zone. The remainder of their army is held in Reserve.
- Rules for deploying into fortifications, Infiltrators, Scouts and Transport vehicles, etc, are as found in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

First Turn

The player who deployed first also has the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Game Length

The game lasts for six turns.

Victory Conditions

Primary Objectives

Death Toll: At the end of the game, each side gains 1 Victory point for each unit they have destroyed or that is Falling Back at the end of the game.

Mortal Blow: A unit entirely wiped out on the turn it arrives from Reserves is worth an additional Victory point to the other side.

Secondary Objectives

Slay the Warlord: If a side destroyed the enemy Warlord, they gain an extra Victory point (in addition to points earned through other objectives).

Execution: Each enemy unit wiped out by a Sweeping Advance earns the side that wiped them out an additional Victory point.

Mission Special Rules

- Reserves (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)
- Night Fighting (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)

Mission 2 – Bad Blood

"Vengeance is mine."

The Apocrypha Terra

In this mission, one side seeks the death of a specific member of the rival force, perhaps sworn to right some terrible wrong, avenge betrayal, fuelled by irrational hatred or else in pursuit of some vital strategic objective.

The Armies

Choose the armies using the Battles in the Age of Darkness rules and Force Organisation charts.

Setting Up The Game

- Set up terrain for the battlefield.
- Determine the deployment map.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.

Deployment

- Make a Shadow War roll-off as described on page 175. The winner may choose to be the Attacker or the Defender.
- The Defender selects their deployment zone and then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units held in Reserves, into their deployment zone.
- The Attacker then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units placed in Reserves, into their deployment zone.
- Rules for deploying into fortifications, Infiltrators, Scouts and Transport vehicles, etc, are as found in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.
- The Attacker writes down the identity of a single Independent Character or Character in the enemy force. In the event that no such models are present (if facing a Questoris Knight Household, for example), the Attacker may target any model in the enemy army they wish. The identity of this 'Priority Target' is kept secret and only revealed at the end of the game when Victory points are tallied.

First Turn

The Attacker has the first turn, unless the Defender can Seize the Initiative (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Game Length

After five turns, roll a D6. On the roll of a 4+, a sixth and final turn is played.

Victory Conditions

Primary Objectives

Death Toll: At the end of the game, each side gains 1 Victory point for each enemy unit they have destroyed or that is Falling Back at the end of the game.

Priority Target: Slaying the Priority Target earns the Attacker an additional D3 Victory points. If the Priority target is still alive at the end of the game, the Defender earns D3+3 Victory points.

Secondary Objectives

Attrition: The army which has destroyed the highest number of enemy units at the end of the game gains an additional Victory point.

Execution: Each enemy unit wiped out by a Sweeping Advance earns the side that wiped them out an additional Victory point.

Mission Special Rules

- Reserves (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)
- Night Fighting (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)

Mission 3 – Denial

"The strong must be strongest alone, and take their strength from the weak."

Ancient Proverb

In the Denial mission, one force has located a resource of great value to the ongoing Shadow War, but in order to claim this prize for themselves must turn at bay to defend it from a rival force following close on their heels.

The Armies

Choose the armies using the Battles in the Age of Darkness rules and Force Organisation charts.

Setting Up The Game

- Set up terrain for the battlefield.
- Determine the deployment map.
- Make a Shadow War roll-off as described on page 175. The winner may choose to be the Defender or the Attacker.
- The Attacker nominates a single item of terrain that is in neither side's deployment zone as the objective. If there are no suitable pieces of terrain in this area, the player may choose to place an additional item, or instead place an Objective marker.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.

Deployment

- The Defender chooses their deployment zone and deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, into their deployment zone. The Defender may not hold any units in Reserve, apart from units that can only be deployed in this manner (such as Drop Pods).
- In addition to the above, the Defender may deploy one of their units within 6" of the chosen objective, so long as no models in the unit are deployed within 12" of an enemy model or inside the enemy deployment zone. If this condition cannot be met, this option is unavailable.
- The Attacker then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units placed in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- Rules for deploying into fortifications, Infiltrators, Scouts and Transport vehicles, etc, are as found in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

First Turn

The Attacker has the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Game Length

Game length is determined using the Random Game Length rule (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Victory Conditions

Primary Objectives

Spoils of War: The side that controls the objective at the end of the game gains 5 Victory points. If neither side controls it, the result is a draw.

Secondary Objectives

None.

Mission Special Rules

- Reserves (Attacker only) (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)

Mission 4 – Suicide Mission

"There comes a time when every commander must consider his warriors not as men but as materiel, and when it comes, it is his duty to spend those lives to the greatest possible effect. Each of us know and accept this fact, whatever our rank or station."

Strike-Marshall Halkus Fin, Legiones Astartes Raven Guard

In this mission, one side has been presented with an unprecedented strategic opportunity or is attempting to capture an objective so critical to their goals that the lives of their warriors themselves are considered secondary to its success.

The Armies

Choose the armies using the Battles in the Age of Darkness rules and Force Organisation charts.

Setting Up The Game

- Set up terrain for the battlefield.
- Determine the deployment map.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.

Deployment

- Make a Shadow War roll-off as described on page 175. The winner may choose to be the Attacker or the Defender.
- The Defender selects their deployment zone and then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- The Attacker then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units placed in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- Rules for deploying into fortifications, Infiltrators, Scouts and Transport vehicles, etc, are as found in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

First Turn

The Defender has the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Game Length

Game length is determined using the Random Game Length rule (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Victory Conditions

Primary Objectives

The Bloody Ground: At the end of every Game Turn, the Attacker earns a single Victory point for every one of their scoring units entirely within the enemy's deployment zone. A running total of Victory points scored in this manner is kept and added together at the end of the game.

Harvest of Foes: At the end of the game, the Defender gains 2 Victory points for each of the Attacker's units they have destroyed or that is Falling Back at the end of the game.

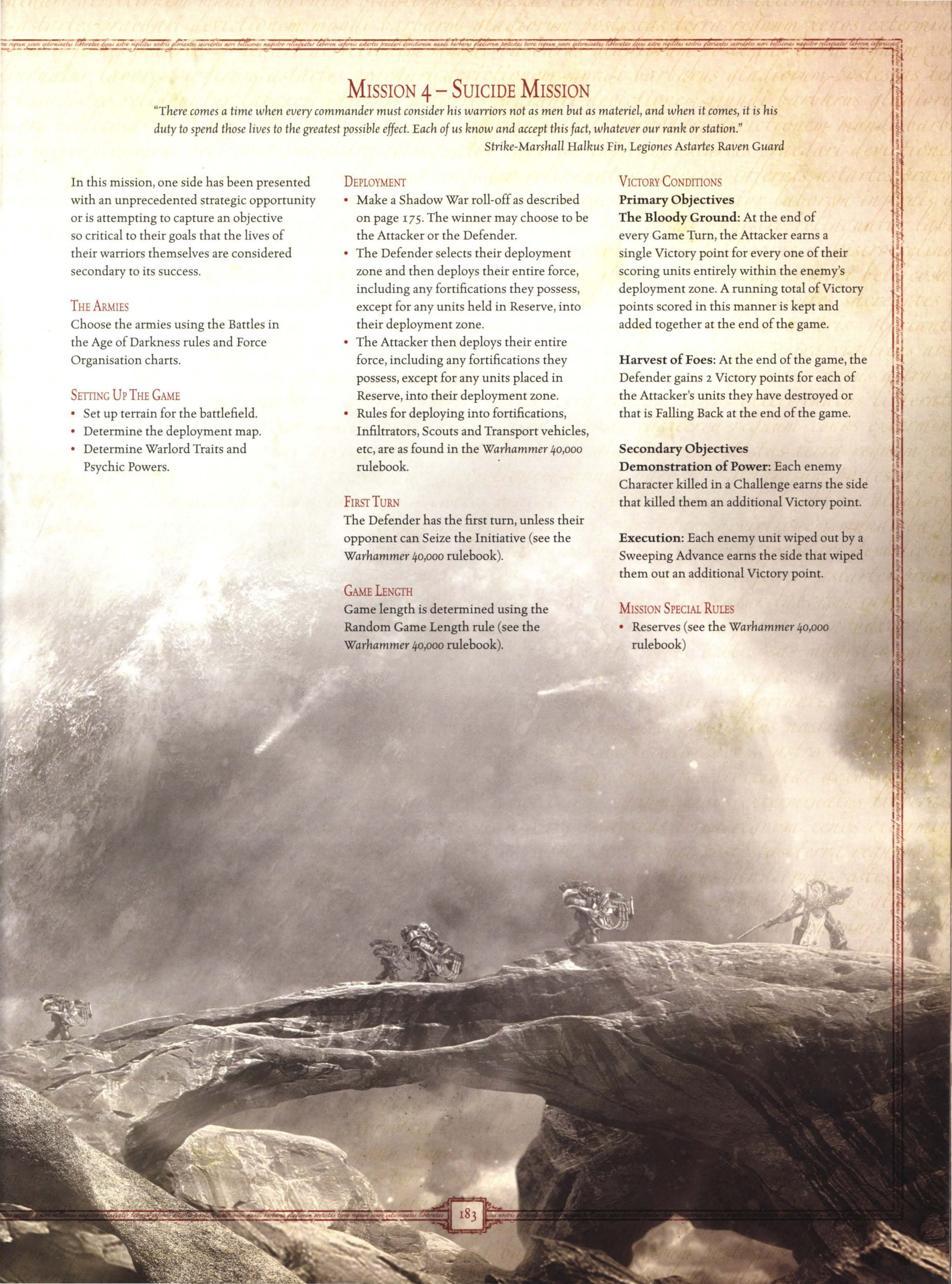
Secondary Objectives

Demonstration of Power: Each enemy Character killed in a Challenge earns the side that killed them an additional Victory point.

Execution: Each enemy unit wiped out by a Sweeping Advance earns the side that wiped them out an additional Victory point.

Mission Special Rules

- Reserves (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)



Mission 5 – Challenge

"To look my foe in the eye as my hand closes about his throat, to see the light dwindle in his eyes at the very moment he perceives his utter defeat – that for me is the true and only definition of victory."

Assault Sergeant Rahnka Hax, Legiones Astartes World Eaters

The ongoing and mutual hatred between two leaders of opposed outcast forces has reached such an intense pitch that only the annihilation of one at the hands of the other will satisfy their need for blood and vengeance.

The Armies

Choose the armies using the Battles in the Age of Darkness rules and Force Organisation charts.

Setting Up The Game

- Set up terrain for the battlefield.
- Determine the deployment map.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.

Deployment

- Make a Shadow War roll-off as described on page 175. The winner may choose to deploy first or second.
- The player who deploys first selects their deployment zone and then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- The player who is deploying second then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units placed in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- Rules for deploying into fortifications, Infiltrators, Scouts and Transport vehicles, etc, are as found in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

First Turn

The player who deployed first also has the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Game Length

This mission lasts for six turns.

Victory Conditions

The main aim of both leaders in this mission is to slay the other, preferably by their own hand.

Primary Objectives

By My Own Hand: Should one side's Warlord slay the other side's Warlord, that side wins the game regardless of any Secondary Objectives. To qualify, the Warlord must have been removed as a casualty as a direct result of the other Warlord's ranged or close combat attack, or lost a Sweeping Advance to their unit. Note that it may be necessary to roll the Warlord's attacks separately if they and/or the other Warlord are part of another unit.

If (and only if) the above condition is not met, Secondary Objectives are used to determine the victor.

Secondary Objectives

Attrition: The army which has destroyed the highest number of enemy units at the end of the game gains an additional Victory point.

Demonstration of Power: Each enemy Character killed in a Challenge earns the side that kills them an additional Victory point.

Glorious Stand: As described earlier in this book, should one side in this mission be drawn from the Knights Questoris army list and the other from a different army, the non-Knights side has the option to re-roll which mission is played. Should the non-Knights side not take this option and decide to rise to the occasion, they earn an additional D3 Victory points in the event that Secondary Objectives are used to determine the winner.

Mission Special Rules

- Reserves (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)

Mission 6 – The Noose

"Here I shall stand; here I shall die."

Ch. V, Vs II, The Feast of Worms

After days or weeks of pursuit, one outcast force has finally cornered its most hated enemy. The defenders know that if they cannot escape the rapidly closing noose, the reinforcements following on their pursuers' heels will overwhelm them. The only option is to smash through the enemy's lines while they still can, and thereby live to fight another day.

The Armies

Choose the armies using the Battles in the Age of Darkness rules and Force Organisation charts.

Setting Up The Game

- Set up terrain for the battlefield.
- Determine the deployment map.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.

Deployment

- Make a Shadow War roll-off as described on page 175. The winner may choose to be the Attacker or the Defender.
- The Defender chooses whether to deploy first or second.
- The player who deploys first selects their deployment zone and then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- The player who is deploying second then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units placed in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- After both armies are deployed but before rolling to Seize the Initiative, the Defender indicates a single point on the Attacker's table edge and marks this point using a token or marker. This point represents the Defender's Escape Point, as detailed under the mission's Primary Objectives.
- Rules for deploying into fortifications, Infiltrators, Scouts and Transport vehicles, etc, are as found in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

First Turn

The player who deployed first also has the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Game Length

After five turns, roll a D6. On the roll of a 4+, a sixth and final turn is played.

Victory Conditions

Primary Objectives

Slip the Noose: The Defender's objective in this mission is to reach the Escape Point by which their army will evade the rapidly encircling enemy force. At the end of the game, the Defender is awarded 2 Victory points for every scoring unit that is entirely within 12" of the Escape Point marker.

The Attacker's objective is to cut off withdrawing forces, and so for each of the Defender's units (scoring or otherwise) that end the game more than 24" from the Escape Point marker, the Attacker earns 1 Victory point.

Secondary Objectives

Slay the Warlord: If a side destroyed the enemy Warlord, they gain an extra Victory point.

Attrition: The army which has destroyed the highest number of enemy units at the end of the game gains an additional Victory point.

Mission Special Rules

- Night Fighting (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)
- Reserves

LEGIONES ASTARTES APPENDIX: NEW RITES OF WAR

"Martial vigour and ferocity are virtues, to be sure. But do not throw your force blindly into battle and say that this is vigour. It is not. Before committing your forces, examine the situation. Review your own strength, and that of your enemy. Remember your own objectives, and try to anticipate those of your opponent. He who fights without understanding the battle he is fighting places himself at the disadvantage."

The Principia Belicosa

This section contains a number of new Rites of War that a model with the Master of the Legion special rule may use, subject to the usual rules and any limitations listed in the entries themselves.

Rite of War: Armoured Breakthrough

When a Legiones Astartes force gives battle on a planetary scale, it often deploys a mass of far-ranging armoured vehicles, their orders to push ahead of the line companies and punch through enemy lines in order to sow death and confusion in rear areas. Tank commanders in these formations are trained to act under their own initiative, and their vehicles are often equipped with additional fuel reserves and their engines upgraded to achieve even greater range and speed than others of their class.

Effects

- **Armour of the Line:** Legion Predator Strike Armour Squadrons (armed with Predator cannon turret and sponson weapons only) must be taken as compulsory Troops choices in the detachment, and may be taken as additional Troops choices. Legion Sicaran Battle Tanks may be taken as Elites choices in this detachment.
- **Master of Armour:** A single Sicaran Battle Tank or a Predator of any type available in the Space Marine Crusade Army list may be taken as a Command vehicle, counting as a HQ choice and the army's Warlord. Instead of rolling for a Warlord Trait, this vehicle has the Command Tank vehicle upgrade and has +1 BS at no additional cost.
- **Extended Range:** All vehicles with the Tank type that have 3 or fewer Hull Points gain the Fast type if they do not have it already.

Limitations

- All Infantry units that can do so must purchase a Dedicated Transport, and those without the option must be deployed mounted in another vehicle which itself has a Transport capacity. All such vehicles must have the Tank or Super-heavy Tank type.
- The detachment may not have more Flyers or Skimmers (in total) than it has Tanks.
- The detachment may not include any fortifications or Immobile units.

Rite of War: Primarch's Chosen

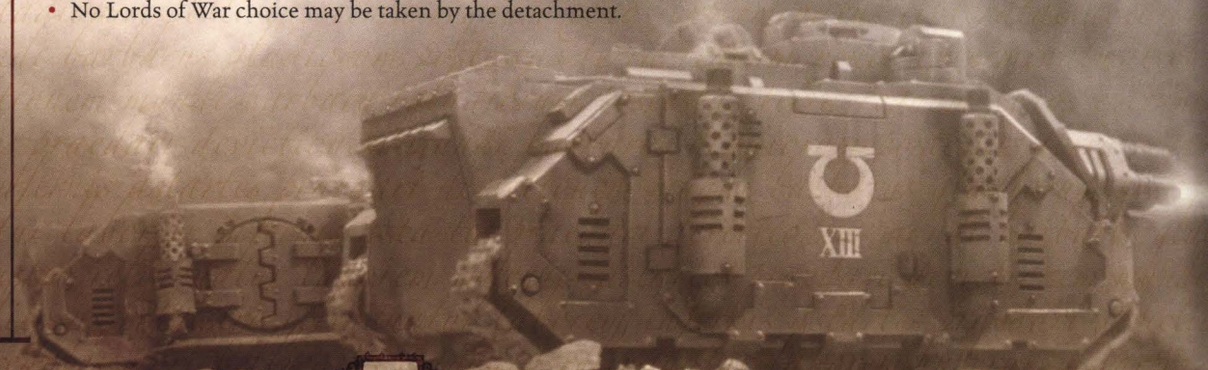
While the Primarchs of the Legiones Astartes frequently led their Legions from the very front, commanding tens of thousands of their sons in vast, sweeping battles, many also undertook missions on a smaller scale, if of equal or greater strategic import. Primarchs led boarding actions against enemy warships for example, or launched decapitation strikes to seek out and eliminate the foe's high command, accompanied by a select band of their most trusted warriors. It was considered an insurmountable honour to be chosen to fight alongside the Primarch in this manner, and one often reserved for a Legion's pre-eminent company, battalion or chapter.

Effects

- **Lord and Master:** When taken in this detachment, a Primarch is counted as a HQ choice instead of a Lords of War choice, and must be both the detachment's compulsory HQ choice and the army's Warlord. When using this Rite of War, a Primarch may be taken in any size of army.
- **The First:** Legion Veteran Squads or Legion Terminator squads must be taken as compulsory Troops choices for this army.

Limitations

- In addition to the Price of Failure special rule in play when a Primarch is fielded, if the Primarch is slain, all other units in the detachment cease to count as scoring units (but may still count as denial units).
- The number of units with the Legiones Astartes special rule in this detachment must be greater than the units without the Legiones Astartes special rule in total.
- No Lords of War choice may be taken by the detachment.



Rite of War: Brethren of Iron

As the relentless wars of the Horus Heresy ground ever on, few of the Legions were spared suffering losses on an apocalyptic scale. Most found some means of bolstering their ranks, some conventional, others arcane and proscribed. One fairly common method of temporarily filling depleted ranks was to induct allied Cybernetica maniples directly into line units, and some fought with such implacable ferocity that they were granted Legion heraldry and afforded a permanent place in the ranks. Few of these 'iron brethren' survived long however, for they were often used as expendable assault waves attacking ahead of the more valuable and hard to replace Legionaries.

Effects

- **Inducted into the Line:** Castellax Battle-automata maniples may be taken as non-compulsory Troops choices, Vorax Battle-automata maniples may be taken as non-compulsory Fast Attack choices and Domitar Battle-automata maniples may be chosen as non-compulsory Elites choices.
- **Instrument of Command:** Any Techmarine may be equipped with a cortex controller at +15 points.

Limitations

- The detachment may not have more Battle-automata maniples (of any type) than it has squads with the Legiones Astartes special rule.
- At least one model with a cortex controller must be included in the detachment per three cybernetica cortex-equipped units in the detachment.
- No Battle-automata in the detachment may be given the Paragon of Metal special rule.
- A Forge Lord (or Iron-Father or Warsmith) must be taken as the compulsory HQ choice for this detachment if this Rite of War is used as the army's Primary Detachment. (Note that this will preclude certain other characters from being included in the detachment, and means in most cases that both a Legion Praetor and a Forge Lord must be taken).
  - The only Consul types that may be included in the detachment are the Forge Lord and the Praevian (see page 232).

Rite of War: Fury of the Ancients

Even at the height of the Horus Heresy, it was considered wise to keep those Legionaries interred within the ironform of a mighty Dreadnought in stasis-slumber as much as possible, or else risk the total collapse of their sanity. At times however, circumstance dictated every available Dreadnought be awakened and committed to battle, even at the risk of their minds being sluggish until fully roused by the clamour of war. One such instance was the defence of the World Eaters flagship the Conqueror, when the only warriors on hand to repel an Ultramarines boarding assault were the Dreadnoughts held in stasis at the vessel's heart – those World Eaters assigned to its defence having been unable to resist the urge to join the drop assault on the world of Armatura below.

Effects

- **The Awakened:** Legion Dreadnought Talons and Legion Contemptor Dreadnought Talons may be taken as Troops choices and must be taken as compulsory Troops choices for this detachment, but may no longer be taken as Elites choices.

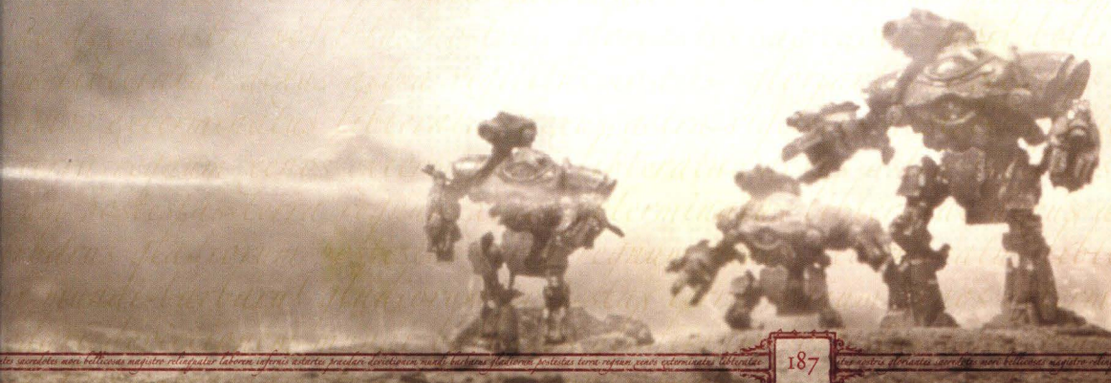
Limitations

- The detachment must contain a Forge Lord and a Primus Medicae.
- The army automatically loses any roll to Seize the Initiative.
- The army may not include an Allied Detachment or Fortifications of any kind.
- For each Dreadnought destroyed from the detachment, the opposing player gains an additional Victory point.

"I was there at the Urgall Depression, when the second wave turned. When the Word Bearers opened fire on us, I stood aghast for what felt like a full hour, though in truth mere seconds must have passed. In the space of those few moments, moments which would change everything, for all time, my entire squad was slaughtered about me. Somehow, the shells and the las blasts passed me by, left me standing amongst the broken and burned and torn dead.

Then the spell was broken, the clamour of betrayal crashed in upon my awareness, a bolt shell struck my left temple, staining my vision blood red. And then, the killing began."

Legionary Dyisonus Ghry,
3rd Assault Battalion,
Legiones Astartes Raven Guard,
writing of the Isstvan V
Dropsite Massacre,
019.M31



"I have erred,
and so I must atone.
I lived when I should have died,
For my punishment I must
become Immortal,
My deeds alone remaining"

Oath of the Immortals
The Rule of Ferrus Manus

Rite of War: Outcast Sons

Only long after the Horus Heresy, well into the period known as the Scouring, was the Imperium able to discern something of the awful truth of just how far the Warmaster's treachery had infected the once steadfast Legiones Astartes. Even Legions believed wholly loyal were found to have been tainted in some way, with small contingents of Legionaries, often those serving far from their brethren or on detached duty alongside those more overt in their treachery, siding with the Warmaster. None can say for certain how many White Scars or Iron Hands, for example, served in the ranks of the Traitors, for the records have long since been purged lest any hint of dishonour endure.

This Rite of War represents a small Traitor element of an otherwise loyal Legion, driven to betrayal by the force of will or hubris of a powerful and influential leader. Players are, of course, free to use any Rite of War with any Legion as Loyalists or Traitors – this option is provided to focus in on this particular element of a force's character.

Effects

- **Brothers No More:** Characters in the detachment must always issue and accept Challenges against enemy models with the Legiones Astartes special rule. When fighting in a Challenge, such characters have the Preferred Enemy (Legiones Astartes) special rule.
- **Betrayers:** Models in the detachment with the Legiones Astartes special rule may re-roll Sweeping Advances against enemies with the Legiones Astartes special rule.
- **Cut from the Same Cloth:** D3 units in the detachment gain the Scout special rule when the Warlord of the enemy army has the same Legion-specific version of the Legiones Astartes special rule as their own Warlord. This roll is made immediately before Infiltration moves are made.

Limitations

- This Rite of War may only be taken by a detachment whose Warlord has one of the following versions of the Legiones Astartes special rule: Legiones Astartes (Salamanders), Legiones Astartes (Raven Guard), Legiones Astartes (Iron Hands), Legiones Astartes (Imperial Fists), Legiones Astartes (Space Wolves), Legiones Astartes (White Scars), Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels), Legiones Astartes (Dark Angels), Legiones Astartes (Ultramarines).
- The detachment may never have more Elites choices than it has Troops choices.
- The detachment may not take any units marked as only available to a Loyalist army.
- Models from the detachment with the Legiones Astartes special rule count all Allies in the same force as 'By the Warmaster's Command'. This overrides the normal Age of Darkness Allies matrix.

Rite of War: Sky Hunter Phalanx

A Sky Hunter Phalanx represents a mustering of large numbers of a Legion's fastest anti-grav units, or a specialised chapter consisting entirely of such assets. Sky Hunter Phalanxes are employed to range ahead of large Legion deployments and to engage forward enemy units before they can react, embarking on wide flanking manoeuvres that isolate and then decapitate the foe.

Effects

- **Sky Hunter Elite:** Legion Jetbike Sky Hunter Squadrons may be taken as Troops choices in a Primary Detachment using this Rite of War.
- **Rapid Encirclement:** Jetbikes (including those taken as mounts by Independent Characters) may leave the table in their own Movement phase and be placed into Ongoing Reserves. These units re-enter play using the Outflank special rule.

Limitations

- The only vehicles allowed in the army are those that have the Skimmer or Flyer type.
- All infantry units in the army must begin the game deployed in a Flyer that has sufficient Transport capacity to carry them.
- Other than Infantry transported in Flying Transport vehicles, the only unit types that may be taken are Jet Bikes.
- The army may not include a Fortifications Detachment or an Allied Detachment.

Rite of War: Orphans of Betrayal

Though the atrocity committed at Isstvan III purged the ranks of the Sons of Horus, Death Guard, Emperor's Children and World Eaters of those who would not follow their Primarchs into treachery, there were other elements of these and other Traitor Legions serving much further afield; at the forefront of distant expeditions or in the households of militant Rogue Traders, for example. Upon returning to the Imperium, some of these small, scattered units rejected their kin's treachery and began a lonely war against their erstwhile brethren, often unacknowledged by either side, their deeds unrecorded or misattributed in the official histories, or else lost to the anarchy that was the Age of Darkness.

This Rite of War represents a small Loyalist element of an otherwise Traitor Legion, shielded from the taint that claimed their brethren by the purity and conviction of a powerful leader. Players are, of course, free to use any Rite of War with any Legion as Loyalists or Traitors – this option is provided to focus in on this particular element of a force's character.

Effects

- **Brothers no More:** Characters in the detachment must always issue and accept Challenges against enemy models with the Legiones Astartes special rule. When fighting in a Challenge, such characters gain Feel No Pain (4+).
- **Bitter Brethren:** All models in the detachment with the Legiones Astartes special rule have the Hatred special rule against enemy Space Marines with the same Legion-specific version of that rule as them.
- **Beyond Fear:** All models in the detachment are immune to the Fear special rule when it is caused by their own Primarch (ie, the enemy Primarch has the same Legion-specific version of the Legiones Astartes special rule as them).

Limitations

- This Rite of War may only be taken by a detachment whose Warlord has one of the following versions of the Legiones Astartes special rule: Legiones Astartes (Sons of Horus), Legiones Astartes (Death Guard), Legiones Astartes (World Eaters), Legiones Astartes (Emperor's Children), Legiones Astartes (Iron Warriors), Legiones Astartes (Word Bearers), Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion), Legiones Astartes (Night Lords), Legiones Astartes (Thousand Sons).
- The detachment may not take any units marked as only available to a Traitor army.
- The detachment may not include allied Space Marines.
- The detachment may not take any fortifications.
- The detachment may never have more Heavy Support choices than it has Troops choices.

Rite of War: Drop Assault Vanguard

A doctrine mastered by the Legiones Astartes in the earliest days of the Great Crusade's expansion into the galaxy, an Assault Vanguard involved massed dropships passing low over the battlefield in order to disgorge jump pack-equipped Assault squads from their open hatches. With the skies over their heads turned black by the descent of the Angels of Death, foes were overwhelmed and few could stand against such a concentration of overwhelming force.

Effects

- **Death from Above:** At least half of the Legion Assault Squads in the army must always enter play using the Deep Strike special rules. At the beginning of the controlling player's first turn, this 'Assault Vanguard' may deploy all of its Legion Assault Squads at once.
- **Darken the Skies:** In the player turn after that in which the Assault Vanguard deploys, enemy models within 12" may only fire Snap Shots against them.
- **Storm of Angels:** In the Assault phase of the controlling player's second Game Turn, all of the Assault Squads of the Assault Vanguard gain the Hit & Run special rule.

Limitations

- Compulsory Troops choices made for a detachment using this Rite of War must be Legion Assault Squads.
- Only units that can deploy via Deep Strike or embarked upon a Transport vehicle with the Flyer type may be taken in the army.
- The army may not include any Immobile units.
- The army may not include a Fortification Detachment or an Allied Detachment.

"The truth will surely blind us; only in the half-light of the lie do we clearly see."

The Warmaster Horus, Prior to the final assault on the Haruspex Gate Bh'al Morthia Campaign

"You will hunt down these 'Shattered Legions'. You will root them out from their shadowed lairs and drive them into the light. You will destroy them. You will finish what we started at Isstvan, you will be my hunter in the void. I will give you ships and warriors that you desire so you remove this irritation, this little thorn, and in doing so you will execute my will and end what was well begun."

Warmaster Horus to Tybalt Marr, Legion Command auto-scribe transcript, prior to Sons of Horus Legion deployment to Molech

Rite of War: Legion Recon Company

All of the Legions maintained bodies of warriors dedicated to the vital battlefield duty of reconnaissance. When the Legion went to war en masse, it was often preceded by such a body, serving as pathfinders and scouts for the main force.

Effects

- **Recon Company:** Legion Recon Squads are compulsory Troops choices in the Primary Detachment.
- **Forward Scouts:** All models deployed onto the table using the Scout or Infiltrate special rules gain the Shrouded special rule during the first Game Turn.
- **Rites of Observation:** When rolling to determine which side takes the first turn and/or to Seize the Initiative, a force using this Rite of War may re-roll the result.

Limitations

- No Heavy Support units may be deployed onto the battlefield during deployment, and must instead be placed into Reserves.
- The force's Primary Detachment must include an additional compulsory Troops choice, which must be filled by a Legion Recon Squad.
- No units or models with Terminator armour of any type may be included in a detachment using this Rite of War.

Rite of War: Zone Mortalis Assault Force

Though masters of all forms of warfare, the Legiones Astartes are superbly equipped and trained for shock boarding actions, their skill, ferocity and sheer toughness reaching its apex when called upon to fight in the close environs of a deadly Zone Mortalis war zone.

Effects

- **Shock Force:** Legion Terminator Squads may be selected as non-compulsory Troops choices.
- **Teleport Assault:** Any one Legion Terminator Squad included may be given the Deep Strike special rule, representing a teleport assault.
- **Interlocking Defence:** When used in a Zone Mortalis game, a Legion Breacher Squad whose members are all currently in base-to-base contact forming an unbroken chain and neither fleeing nor Pinned may add +1 to all Invulnerable saves.

Limitations

- No unit may include more than 15 models.
- No vehicles other than Walkers may be taken.
- No Super-heavy Vehicles or Gargantuan Creatures may be taken.

Rite of War: Sacrificial Offering

A tactic first used by the IIIrd Legion in the construction of such bastions as the Perfect Fortress on the world of Narsis, the Sacrificial Offering uses Auxilia troops as bait, Legion units counter-attacking at the moment the enemy believes their victory complete.

This Rite of War represents a Traitor Legion supported by a larger number of Imperialis Militia support troops which are to be used as cannon fodder to draw the enemy into a trap. As such, it makes an ideal match-up against a Loyalist Shattered Legion force.

Effects

- **Circling the Trap:** All models in the Primary Detachment gain the Outflank special rule and must begin the game held in Reserve.
- **Faith Misplaced:** The army's Allied Detachment gains the Stubborn special rule while in its own deployment zone.
- **Beneath Contempt:** The units of the Allied Detachment never yield Victory points for being destroyed.

Limitations

- The army must include an Allied Detachment drawn from the Imperialis Militia and Warp Cult army list, and this must begin the game deployed.
- The army must include a Fortifications Detachment.
- All Primary Detachment units must begin in Reserve.
- The Primary Detachment may not include any units with the Immobile or the Slow and Purposeful special rules.
- The army may not include any models that deploy using the Deep Strike special rule.
- This Rite of War may only be used in a Traitor army.

LEGION-SPECIFIC RITES OF WAR

The following Rites of War are specific to the Legion indicated and may only be taken by a Primary Detachment with the correlating version of the Legiones Astartes special rule. Many of these Rites focus on a particular Legion-specific unit, while others are inspired by certain events in the Age of Darkness up to around the year 010.M31, whether described in the books of the Forge World Horus Heresy series or the novels published by Black Library.

Rites of War for the Blood Angels, White Scars and Dark Angels are to be found in the respective sections of the Legiones Astartes appendix.

'We are the anvil; now behold the hammer.'

Calla Drackenholt
Captain, 23rd Company,
Imperial Fists Legion
The Battle of
Nighthaven Landing

Sons of Horus Unique Rite of War: The Long March

Even before the advent of the Warmaster's heresy, the Sons of Horus Legion was honoured as the first among equals. After Isstvan V, they formed the main body of the Traitors' great advance towards Terra, a relentless, all-conquering host that swept all before it and against which no world could stand.

This Rite of War represents the Sons of Horus as they fought across countless battlefields on the long march that would see them conquer such worlds as Manachea, Dagonet, Dwell, Molech and countless others, a march that would eventually carry them to the Throneworld of Terra itself.

Effects

- **Relentless March:** Infantry units with the Legiones Astartes (Sons of Horus) special rule gain one of the following special rules from the beginning of its own player turn until the end of its opponent's next player turn when the majority of its models begin that player turn in the area indicated:
  - Relentless – in friendly deployment zone.
  - Fleet – in No Man's Land (ie, neither its own or its opponent's deployment zone where this is relevant to the mission being played).
  - Crusader – in the enemy's deployment zone.
- **The Warmaster's Portion:** As Horus' own, the Legion benefitted from the finest equipment and the greatest surplus of arms and munitions of any Legion. On the first turn of the game, a detachment using this Rite of War may re-roll all To Hit rolls of a 1. In addition, Legion Terminators may be chosen as non-compulsory Troops choices in this detachment.

Limitations

- This Rite of War may only be used by a Sons of Horus army belonging to the Traitor faction, and may not be used in conjunction with the Shattered Legion special rules.
- The detachment may not include any models with the Slow and Purposeful special rule, unless they deploy via Deep Strike or begin the game carried in a Transport vehicle.
- Detachments using this Rite of War may not take a Fortification Detachment or an Allied Detachment.

Death Guard Unique Rite of War: Creeping Death

As the Horus Heresy ground onwards, the Death Guard unsealed ever more forbidden arsenals and unleashed ever more potent weapons long denied to the Legiones Astartes by edict of the Emperor himself. At length, they were able to concentrate such weapons along the line of advance, creating a rolling bombardment of chemical munitions and a relentless rolling chem-fog from which the Death Guard would assault in lockstep, somehow untouched by weapons able to render entire forests to fetid swamps.

Effects

- **Mist-clad:** Infantry models in the detachment gain a cover save of 5+ when in open ground so long as no enemy model is present within 12".
- **Bio-phage Bombardment:** Before the game begins, after both sides have deployed (including Scouts and Infiltrators), roll a D6 for every piece of terrain representing a wood or jungle on the table. On a roll of 4+, the terrain is reduced to a fetid chemical mire. Any cover save it afforded is worsened by -1, and it counts as dangerous terrain to any model that does not have the Legiones Astartes (Death Guard) special rule.
- **Toxin Weapons:** All frag grenades and missiles in the detachment are increased to Strength 5.

Limitations

- This Rite of War may only be used by a Death Guard army belonging to the Traitor faction, and may not be used in conjunction with the Shattered Legion special rules.
- The army using this Rite of War must include a Siege Breaker Legion Consul.
- In games where one side is the Attacker and the other the Defender, the side using this Rite of War must always be the Attacker.
- Detachments using this Rite of War may not take a Fortification Detachment or an Allied Detachment.

"Expose yourself to your deepest fear. After that, fear has no power and the fear of freedom shrinks and vanishes. You will be free."

Suppressed auto-transcript, IIIrd Legion

World Eaters Unique Rite of War: The Crimson Path

From the earliest days of the Great Crusade, the XIIth Legion was known for its Legionaries' willingness to pay even the highest butcher's bill in exchange for victory. At times it was observed that they seemed able to shrug off injuries that should have laid them low, somehow staving off death for the few moments more that it took to close upon the breach so that World Eater and enemy might die together in the mutual embrace of death. This horrifying spectacle grew ever more common as the Legion's descent into damnation accelerated, until, by the advent of the Shadow Crusade, it was almost a standard battle doctrine in certain assault companies.

Effects

- **Forlorn Hope:** All infantry models in the army with the Legiones Astartes (World Eaters) special rule have the Feel No Pain special rule while within the enemy's deployment zone. Models that already have Feel No Pain improve their roll by +1 (to a maximum of 3+).
- **Unto Death:** Independent Characters with the Legiones Astartes (World Eaters) special rule gain the It Will Not Die special rule while within the enemy's deployment zone. Independent Characters that already have this special rule improve the roll by +1 (to a maximum of 4+).

Limitations

- In missions in which the Attrition and/or Linebreaker Secondary Objectives are in play, the opposing player earns an additional +1 Victory point for each of these objectives the World Eaters player does not fulfil.
- A detachment making use of this Rite of War may not include any Immobile units or units with the Slow and Purposeful special rule.
- Detachments using this Rite of War may not take a Fortifications Detachment or a Space Marine Allied Detachment.

Emperor's Children Unique Rite of War: 3rd Company Elite

In the aftermath of the Dropsite Massacre on Isstvan V, the Emperor's Children experienced something of an existential crisis. The Primarch Fulgrim withdrew from his Legion for long months, for reasons that would not be understood for some time. In his absence, passions long held in check by duty and devotion were unleashed, and experiments begun at the earliest stages of the Legion's fall found a foothold amongst willing subjects.

This Rite of War represents a concentration of Emperor's Children Legionaries who have submitted themselves to implantation with sonic shriekers or who bear the fearsome sonic weaponry of the Kakophoni into battle. In particular, it may be used to represent the 3rd Company of the Emperor's Children under Captain Marius Vairosean in the early days of their damnation.

Effects

- **Chosen of Vairosean:** Kakophoni squads may be taken as Troops choices in a detachment using this Rite of War, and all Kakophoni squads in the army gain the Relentless special rule.
- **Sonic Assault:** Any Infantry unit equipped with power armour or artificer armour may take sonic shriekers at +2 points per model. All eligible models in a squad must be so equipped if this option is taken.

Limitations

- This Rite of War may only be used by an Emperor's Children army belonging to the Traitor faction.
- Detachments using this Rite of War may not take a Space Marine Allied Detachment.
- Any allies taken in the army count as one level worse than normal on the Age of Darkness Allies Matrix (Fellow Warriors become Distrusted Allies, for example).

Word Bearers Unique Rite of War: Last of the Serrated Sun

The Serrated Sun Chapter of the Legiones Astartes Word Bearers were the first sons of Lorgar to walk the Path of the Ruinous Powers, and most of its Legionaries fell in battle at the hands of the betrayed Raven Guard at the Isstvan V Dropsite Massacre. Later on, the chapter's legacy would be passed on to the Vakrah Jal, but for a time the survivors of the Serrated Sun formed a vengeful, dedicated and utterly damned elite within the XVIIth Legion and maintained the specialised drop assault doctrines at which it had once been unequalled.

Effects

- **Company of Monsters:** Gal Vorbak Dark Brethren may be taken as Troops in a Primary Detachment using this Rite of War. All units of Gal Vorbak have access to Legion Drop Pods and Anvillus Pattern Dreadclaw Drop Pods as Dedicated Transports, and must take one of these options.
- **Drop Elite:** Any unit with access to a Rhino armoured transport as a Dedicated Transport may instead take a Legion Drop Pod.
- **Burning Sun:** Enemy units within 12" of the landing point of a Deep Striking Legion Drop Pod or Anvillus Pattern Dreadclaw Drop Pod must take a Pinning test after the vehicle's final position is determined.

Limitations

- All infantry units in the army must deploy via a Deep Striking Drop Pod, by teleportation if such an option is available or transported inside a Flyer that has sufficient Transport capacity to carry them.
- The army may not include any Immobile units.
- The army may not include a Fortification Detachment or an Allies Detachment.

Night Lords Unique Rite of War: Horror Cult

For many in the Night Lords Legion, the outbreak of the Horus Heresy precipitated an unstopping of a barely contained well of horrors. Fuelled by the blood of those they betrayed upon the black sands of the Urgall Depression, the Legion set itself upon a crusade of blood and terror, ostensibly in the name of the Warmaster and in furtherance of his cause. In reality, many were simply giving license to the very worst devils of their nature with little or no regard for the strategic plans of the Warmaster or even their own Primarch. The worst of these were the Night Raptor squads, who flocked together into bodies that were as much cult as battlefield formation, their commanders the high priests of horror unleashed for the sheer terror it evoked in its foes.

Effects

- **Raptor Cult:** Night Raptor Squads may be taken as Troops choices in a detachment using this Rite of War.
- **Beyond Judgement:** Any squad may be equipped with Trophies of Judgement (granting the squad the Fear special rule) at a cost of +25 points per squad.
- **Talons of Fear:** Any infantry squad of ten or more models in this detachment may take a Kharybdis Assault Claw as a Dedicated Transport for 260 points.

Limitations

- Models in a detachment using this Rite of War that have the Legiones Astartes (Night Lords) special rule must always declare a charge if there is an enemy model they can harm in melee within 12" in the Charge sub-phase.
- A detachment using this Rite of War may not take a Fortifications Detachment or a Space Marine Allied Detachment.
- This Rite of War may not be taken by a detachment belonging to the Loyalist faction.

'Some may say, "What has he done" and call me mad priest, fallen vizier. My answer shall be as ever it has, simply that I have done what must be done.'

Lorgar,
Primarch of the Legiones Astartes Word Bearers

"Victory lies not in iron, but in mettle."

Samerik Gun Clan Axiom

Iron Warriors Unique Rite of War: The Ironfire

A siege doctrine conceived by the Warsmith Idriss Krendl in the aftermath of the fall of the Schadenhold Bastion, the Ironfire Protocol facilitates the rapid capture of Loyalist strongholds without the need to commit an entire Grand Company, thus serving the Warmaster's orders to the Iron Warriors to topple Loyalist fortresses ahead of the march on Terra. Corrupted mind-impulse technology taken from the Forge World of Diamat allowed Iron Warriors gunners to interface with their weapons so closely that they could target heavy ordnance with preternatural accuracy, allowing them to unleash a rolling bombardment ahead of assault units closing on enemy positions.

Effects

- **Rolling Bombardment:** Barrage weapons targeted at any point within 12" of a friendly Iron Warriors unit deviate D6" instead of 2D6". Having resolved such a barrage attack, leave a counter at the point the blast marker was centred upon. Subsequent barrage attacks targeted at any point that is both within 18" of one of these 'Ironfire counters' and within 6" of a friendly Iron Warriors unit do not deviate at all. If a Shooting phase passes without any new Ironfire counters being placed, all such counters in play are removed at the end of the phase.
- **Ride the Ironfire:** Iron Warriors units within 6" of an Ironfire counter are Fearless.

Limitations

- In a mission where one side is the Attacker and the other the Defender, the side using this Rite of War must always be the Attacker.
- Detachments using this Rite of War may not take a Fortifications Detachment or a Space Marine Allied Detachment.

Alpha Legion Unique Rite of War: Headhunter Leviathal

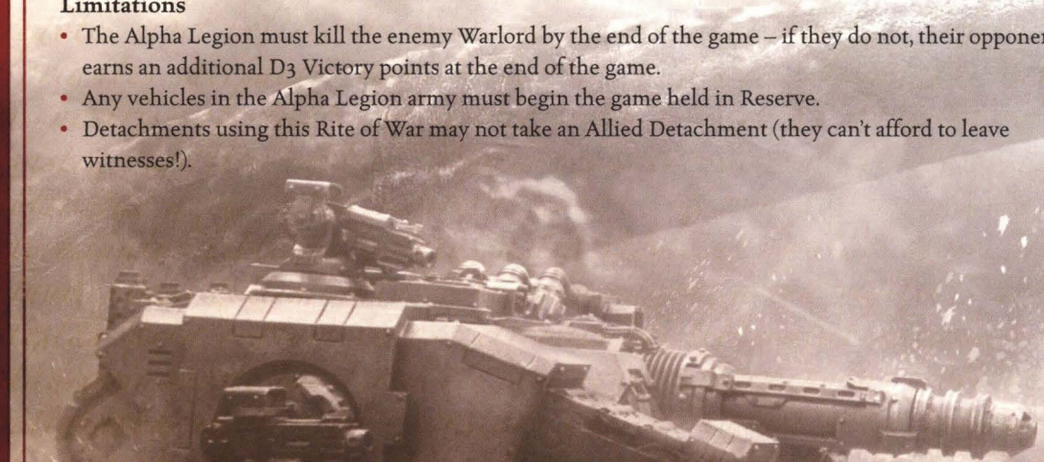
The activities of the Alpha Legion throughout the Great Crusade and the Horus Heresy were ever shrouded in mystery, few more so than the operations of its elite Headhunters. Though no first-hand eye witness accounts describe such missions in reliable detail, secondary evidence of such operations being carried out has been discovered the length and breadth of the war-torn Imperium.

Effects

- **Headhunter Elite:** A detachment using this Rite of War must take Headhunter Kill Teams as their compulsory Troops choices, and may take Headhunter Kill Teams as additional Troops choices.
- **Sudden Strike:** If your army's Primary Detachment is using this Rite of War, you may re-roll the dice to see who gets the first turn.
- **False Flags:** Any enemy unit that declares a ranged attack against an Alpha Legion unit in the first Game Turn must first pass a Leadership test, unless it has itself been fired upon by an Alpha Legion unit that turn. If the test is passed, the unit may fire as normal, but if failed, it may not fire at all in that Shooting phase. Overwatch fire is unaffected.

Limitations

- The Alpha Legion must kill the enemy Warlord by the end of the game – if they do not, their opponent earns an additional D3 Victory points at the end of the game.
- Any vehicles in the Alpha Legion army must begin the game held in Reserve.
- Detachments using this Rite of War may not take an Allied Detachment (they can't afford to leave witnesses!).



Imperial Fists Unique Rite of War: Hammerfall Strike Force

Originally constituted as a template for landing forces deployed from the mighty Phalanx – the flagship of the Legiones Astartes Imperial Fists – a Hammerfall strike force is a concentration of elite, ship-borne units deployed for the purpose of enacting sudden and overwhelming boarding or landing actions against a foe that must be destroyed without mercy or quarter. The force utilises rare and invaluable teleportarium arrays to teleport transponder-equipped warriors into the heart of a battle, the arcane devices ensuring they materialise in a flash of golden light so intense that enemy warriors are temporarily blinded.

Effects

- **Landing Force:** Phalanx Warder Squads may be taken as Troops choices in a detachment using this Rite of War.
- **Teleport Array:** Teleport transponders may be taken by any Infantry unit with the Legiones Astartes (Imperial Fists) special rule at +15 points for a squad and +10 points for an Independent Character.
- **Blinding Luminescence:** Units deploying by Deep Strike via teleportation gain the Shrouded special rule from the moment they are placed on the table until the beginning of their next player turn. In addition, every enemy unit within 12" and line of sight of the Deep Striking unit must take a Blind test at the end of the phase.

Limitations

- Any vehicles taken in the army must begin the game held in Reserve.
- The army may not include a Fortifications Detachment or an Allied Detachment.

Ultramarines Unique Rite of War: Vigil Opertii Mission

The Vigil Opertii is a largely unseen and unhallowed wing of the XIIIth Legion's military strength, and it serves to underpin the Legion's control of its home domain of Ultramar. Its activities are shrouded in mystery but thought largely to focus on counter-insurgency and internal policing operations, and at times in longer term post-Compliance actions where the population of a newly conquered world retains some element of recidivist intent.

This Rite of War represents one possible iteration of a Vigil Opertii force, built around a core of Legion-bonded, augmented warriors, perhaps aspirants who fell short of full Legion induction but who remain useful nonetheless, led by a cadre of Legion veterans. Such forces may be used in a variety of situations, but would be highly appropriate for use against a Traitor Imperialis Militia force or perhaps an Alpha Legion force attempting to subvert Loyalist control of a contested region.

This Rite of War is very much the opposite side of the coin to the Sacrificial Offering Rite of War presented earlier, demonstrating a Legiones Astartes force fighting alongside mortal allies instead of using them as cannon fodder.

Effects

- **Vigil Auxilia:** All infantry units in the Allied Detachment in this army have the Infiltrators special rule.
- **Sacred Duty:** All infantry units in the Allied Detachment have the Implacable Advance special rule and therefore count as scoring units regardless of their battlefield role.
- **Overseers:** Legion Recon squads lose the Support Squad special rule and may therefore be taken as a compulsory Troops choices.

Limitations

- The army must include an Allied Detachment drawn from the Loyalist Imperialis Militia and Warp Cult army list, and this must take the Gene-crafted and Warrior Elite Provenances.
- The Allied Detachment may not include Inducted Levy Squads.
- This Rite of War may only be used by an army belonging to the Loyalist faction.
- The Primary Detachment must include a Legion Vigilator.

"Each deed we perform is the setting of one stone upon another towards the raising of this great edifice that is the Imperium. The Traitors would tear down all our work, and bury us in the rubble of our own destruction."

Castellan Felkon,
Legiones Astartes Imperial Fists

"Be like unto the quenched blade fresh from tempering; cold and hard on the exterior, the red heat of the forge burning unseen within."

From the Uncollected Writings of Ferrus Manus

Iron Hands Unique Rite of War: Company of Bitter Iron

Like the other Legions betrayed at Isstvan V, the Iron Hands did not consolidate into a single, united body again for several years. Many surviving Iron Hands joined Shadrak Meduson's Shattered Legion attack-cells, while others rallied to the banner of the Red Talon. Some Iron Hands units fought their way back to Medusa, and considering themselves to have failed in their duty to the Legion and to their Primarch, cast off their Clan icons, renounced their companies and formed themselves into units of Medusan Immortals. Steeped in self-loathing and bitterness, these forces resolved to sell their lives dearly fighting the Traitors that had laid the Iron Hands so low.

Effects

- **Company of Immortals:** A detachment using this Rite of War may take Medusan Immortals as Troops choices.
- **Immortal Hatred:** All units in the Primary Detachment with the Legiones Astartes (Iron Hands) special rule gain the Hatred (Traitors) special rule.
- **Bitter Duty:** Medusan Immortals are Stubborn when the majority of a unit's models are inside the enemy's deployment zone.

Limitations

- This Rite of War may only be used by an army that belongs to the Loyalist faction, and may not be used in conjunction with the Shattered Legions Theme.
- An army using this Rite of War may not take an Allied Detachment.
- The army may not include Ferrus Manus.

Raven Guard Unique Rite of War: Liberation Force

In the aftermath of the Dropsite Massacre it was feared that Lord Corax, Primarch of the Raven Guard, had fallen, but in fact he had survived and led several thousand of his sons on a ninety-eight day campaign of vengeance and survival before his force was extricated from Isstvan V. Having returned to the Legion's home world, Corax led the Raven Guard on a campaign to liberate the peoples of numerous worlds across the southern Imperium whose leaders had declared for the Warmaster. With each world freed from the yoke of treachery another Loyalist army was raised, and the scales of justice tipped but a fraction back in favour of Terra.

Effects

- **Freedom Fighters:** Once per game, declared by the Raven Guard player at the beginning of a Game Turn of their choice, every model in the army gains the Zealot special rule for the remainder of that Game Turn.
- **Slayer of Tyrants:** When playing a mission that uses the Slay the Warlord Secondary Objective, the controlling player earns not 1 but D3 Victory points for achieving this Victory Condition.
- **Lead by Example:** Should the army include an Allied Detachment drawn from the Imperialis Militia and Warp Cults army list, models from that detachment are Fearless within 6" of any model that has the Legiones Astartes (Raven Guard) special rule.

Limitations

- This Rite of War may not be used by an army making use of the Shattered Legions Theme.
- An army making use of this Rite of War may not take a Fortifications Detachment or any units with the Immobile or Slow and Purposeful special rules.
- This Rite of War may only be used by a detachment belonging to the Loyalist faction.

Salamanders Unique Rite of War: The Awakening Fire

For decades, the Legiones Astartes Salamanders had drawn strength from the teachings of their Primarch, through the doctrines and rituals of the Promethean Cult. When Lord Vulkan was lost to his sons upon the bloody killing ground of the Urgall Depression, those few Legionaries who had not been assigned to the Isstvan V Retribution Fleet turned to the Promethean Cult for succour, plumbing its hidden depths for some guidance as to how they should overcome their unfathomable loss. In time, a new strand of belief would emerge, one that challenged the accepted foundation of the Imperial Truth upon which the Imperium had been built.

Effects

- **Devils from the Dark:** Infantry models in a Primary Detachment using this Rite of War that have the Legiones Astartes (Salamanders) special rule cause Fear.
- **Unto the Fires:** In missions that make use of the Random Game Length scenario special rule, the Salamanders player may declare that the game is to be played for one more Game Turn should the roll indicate it ends.
- **Fury of the Salamander:** Librarians in a Primary Detachment using this Rite of War have access to the Fury of the Salamander psychic power (see below). This counts as a Pyromancy power and may be chosen instead of Flame Breath as an alternative Primaris Power so long as the Librarian meets the requirement for the Psychic Focus special rule (see The Psychic Phase chapter of the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Limitations

- A Primary Detachment making use of this Rite of War must include a Legion Chaplain.
- The Primary Detachment may include no more than one of each of the following: Jump Infantry; Jet Bikes; Skimmers; Flyers.
- The army may not include the Primarch Vulkan.
- The army may not make use of a Fortification Detachment or an Allied Detachment.

Fury of the Salamander..... Warp Charge 3

The loss of their Primarch led certain adherents of the Promethean Cult to explore its mysteries still deeper in a quest to overcome their loss and redefine their existence in a universe without Lord Vulkan. Certain of those gifted of psychic powers had revealed to them something of the elemental power of their home world, and using the fire-rites of the Promethean Cult became adept at harnessing it as a terrifying weapon.

Fury of the Salamander is a **beam** with the following profile:

	Range	Str	AP	Type
Fury of the Salamander	18"	5	1	Assault 1, Elemental Horror

Elemental Horror: Units that suffer casualties from this power must make a Morale check regardless of how many casualties are actually caused. The test is made with a penalty to the target's Leadership value equal to the number of wounds the unit lost.

"By fire and by blade are we both sustained and judged."

Sergeant Kol'khon,
Legiones Astartes Salamanders
The Battle of Bel Granicus

The Shattered Legions

"Death may come in many guises: the bolt shell in the back, the barrage from above, the searing parting of the flesh at the caress of a power blade or the cold touch of vacuum in the void. Least treacherous is the death delivered by the hand of the foe who wears his own colours proudly and who comes to the field of battle with honour. Welcome a death delivered by such a foe, for in it is to be found some revenant of honour in a universe where such a thing is all but forgotten."

Legionary Ssaran Dhow, Legiones Astartes Salamanders

Born upon the blood-soaked sands of the Urgall Depression, the Shattered Legions were the consequence of betrayal and fratricide. At the Isstvan V Dropsite Massacre, three entire Legions were rendered all but destroyed: the Salamanders, Raven Guard and Iron Hands, all cut down by the treachery of their supposed brothers when the Word Bearers, Night Lords, Iron Warriors and Alpha Legion forces that constituted the second wave of the assault revealed their allegiance to the Warmaster. Of the hundreds of thousands of Legiones Astartes warriors committed to the initial drop, few broke out of the Traitors' murderous trap, and even then thousands more would be cut down in the brutal pursuit that followed and the titanic void battle that ensued between the Traitor and Loyalist fleets throughout the Isstvan System.

In the days and weeks following the Dropsite Massacre, elements of the Iron Hands, Salamanders and Raven Guard were scattered far and wide across the northern Imperium having been forced to make hastily plotted warp jumps to escape the Traitors' ambush. While some scattered alone, it was also the case that vessels of all three Legions came together in small clusters in the darkness, wounded and distrustful of one another following the massacre, and violently shorn from their Legion's chains of command. Often, once damage was repaired and wounds bound, these clustered forces split apart again to seek their own paths, often cast wide by the burgeoning warp storms that would slowly erupt into the great Ruinstorm, in order to find their way back to their homes or reliable commands, but in other instances, these ragged squadrons remained together, seeking better odds of survival in a galaxy at war in the company of allies who had borne the same savage trial they had, and so were the Shattered Legions born.

Meduson's Labour

Of the three Legions betrayed at Isstvan V, the Iron Hands remained yet the most numerous, for most of their forces were held in orbital reserve when the massacre was unleashed. What remained of the Iron Hands ruling cadre after the Dropsite Massacre —a body called the Clan-Council— bereft of contact with Terra, convened in an effort to assume command of the fightback against Horus, but at Oqueth Minor they fell prey to a further ambush by the Warmaster's forces, and with the destruction of their warship, the Council was no more. It fell to Shadrak Meduson, commander of the Iron Hands Clan Sorrgol to take command of what remained of the bulk of the Iron Hands formations within contact and to re-mould it into a force capable of exacting vengeance for the betrayal at Isstvan V and to contest the Warmaster's inexorable advance on Terra.

Meduson achieved his mission by alloying forces drawn from disparate elements of the three Legions into a new and unbreakable whole, its strengths far greater than the sum of its constituents. The process was far from simple however, for each of the Legions was possessed of its own idiosyncrasies and foibles, and on numerous occasions bitter and grieving Legionaries came within a blade's breadth of shedding one another's blood. Meduson's visionary genius was to divide the survivors of Isstvan V, in total upwards of 20,000 Legionaries, into mixed, independent cells and to distribute them across the territory that the Warmaster had won. His goal in doing so was two-fold—most importantly, Meduson's forces would wage a guerrilla war behind the main lines and with every victory, no matter how seemingly insignificant, bleed the Traitor forces and slow the Warmaster's march on Terra. Meduson's secondary goal was simply to exact raw, bloody vengeance from the Traitors for Isstvan V. For three years, Meduson oversaw a campaign so subtle in its strategy and execution that even the Warmaster himself did not realise that the thousands of raids, assassinations, sabotages and ambushes inflicted upon his hosts as they advanced across the Imperium were in fact the work of one man—that the three Legions Horus believed he had left broken upon the black sands of the Urgall Depression lived yet, and had been reforged into a force of unforeseen potency and value to the Loyalist cause.

The Lost

While the survivors of Isstvan V were the first of those who would be dubbed the 'Shattered Legions', they were far from the only example of disparate Legiones Astartes elements coming together under such circumstances and fighting their own shadow wars far from their respective masters. The anarchy and woe that the Warmaster's treachery had unleashed across the galaxy cannot be understated nor fully assayed, and as the Ruinstorm expanded, numerous Legiones Astartes forces were stranded, isolated from their regular chains of command and left bereft of orders from their Primarch or any other authority they might recognise. Some Legiones Astartes forces, in particular those serving with fleets yet exploring the dark reaches of the galaxy when the Horus Heresy erupted, had no notion which side of the galactic civil war their Primarch had declared for and where their own alliance should thereby fall. While many outlying Legion forces attempted to brave the rising tempest that was the Ruinstorm and rejoin their sires, many to be lost for all time in its raging depths, many more were simply too isolated or too distant from their parent Legions when the Horus Heresy broke out to do so. Many leaders faced with this impossible decision choose to declare openly for neither side and instead pursued the last orders they had received from their Primarchs, regardless of the outcome.

While the Shattered Legion forces operating under Shadrak Meduson were united in their ultimate mission, many other groups fought towards myriad divergent goals. Many had no greater ultimate goal in mind than vengeance, a cause that would sustain them throughout the Age of Darkness and in many cases long into the Great Scouring. Even these often unwittingly served the interests of one side of the civil war or the other, their attacks drawing off resources and disrupting strategic plans with often far-reaching consequences.

Command Hierarchy

Regardless of the circumstances of its coming into being, it is unlikely that any heterogeneous Legiones Astartes body would have remained a cohesive force without the leadership of a strong-willed or charismatic commander. Separated from their Primarchs, such forces had much to overcome and few survived long without some other surrogate-liege. Meduson was far from the only Legiones Astartes officer who was able to draw together elements from several different Legions into a single, effective force, and each had their own way of doing so. Some Shattered Legion commanders were warriors of singular vision or unique wisdom, able to meld their forces into a coherent whole with just words alone. Others led by example, inspiring their forces to emulate their deeds. Some were tyrants however, enforcing their right to lead with threats or with brutal punishment.

In their chains of command, the constituent elements of the Shattered Legion forces generally adhered to the inter-Legion codes laid down at the outset of the Great Crusade. These codes defined an equivalency of rank between commanders of different Legions so that mixed forces could operate side by side in the wars to unify Mankind. These codes

recognised such terms as praetor, centurion, sergeant and many others, even though the officers in question might be known by myriad titles drawn from the culture of their own Legion or the home world from which it recruited. Even in the aftermath of whatever great betrayal or disaster had brought them into being, the inter-Legion codes remained largely intact and so even in forces constituted from multiple Legions, a default chain of command already existed. Given the trauma to which many officers had been subjected, the transition was often far from smooth and the divergent command styles frequently sat ill, but in the main, a potent leader was able to command in a manner broadly in line with the long established Legion standard.

Because Legion ranks were invariably kept intact, it was not uncommon for Shattered Legion forces to feature an uneven proportion of officers and Legionaries from different Legions. For example, a praetor might be accompanied by but a single squad of his own Legion, but by dint of his rank have command over an entire company of warriors drawn from another Legion, themselves led by no officer with rank higher than centurion. Other Shattered Legion groups were heavily dominated by a single faction, but had far smaller contingents from several other Legions in their ranks.

As the Horus Heresy progressed, it became evident that the Traitors had their own Shattered Legion forces, though often brought into being under somewhat different circumstances. Many were simply forces cut off from their own Legions and pursuing existing orders for fear of censure or worse. Some Traitor forces appear to have come into being as some manner of punishment, cast into exile and instructed not to return until some grave task was completed, often the execution of scattered Loyalist survivors. Thus Shattered Legion formations made of mixed Legiones Astartes forces orphaned from their parent Legions were to be found on both sides of Mankind's galactic civil war, engaging in ceaseless, unseen and bitter shadow wars throughout the Age of Darkness and beyond.

Materiél Strength

Constituted as they were from the remnants of the betrayed, the orphaned and the defeated, most groups that could be counted as Shattered Legions were comparatively small compared to the tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands-strong ranks of their parent Legions. Nevertheless, most numbered in excess of several hundred Legiones Astartes and some may have numbered as many as 2,000. Beyond the fact that each Shattered Legion represented a mix of several different Legions, three being the most common, there was little or no commonality in organisation. Some were able to field the iconic units for which their parent formations were well known, such as the Medusan Immortals of the Iron Hands or the Pyroclasts of the Salamanders, while fate and misfortune had stripped others of any trace of such heritage.

One feature common in many amongst the Shattered Legions was the ability to adapt to circumstance, for without such a capacity, most would not have survived the betrayal that had brought them into being. Shorn of Legion lines of communication and supply, they had at best limited access to specialised war machines and were forced to rely primarily on the post-human strengths and abilities bred into each and every Legionary by the genius of the Emperor and his gene-wrights. Standard Legion orders of battle were impossible to impose and so commanders used whatever mix of squads and vehicles they had to complete the mission at hand. This fact made guarding against Shattered Legion attacks a difficult task indeed, for it was largely impossible for their enemies to predict what forces might be brought to bear on a potential target. Over time, Legionaries from often very different Legions learned not only to appreciate their cousins' unique ways of war, but to integrate them into their own tactical doctrines. Company-sized forces made up of squads from several different Legions would therefore deploy and fight so as to amplify the strengths of each Legion's traditions.

Age of Darkness Theme: Shattered Legions

Age of Darkness Themes are a means of gathering together several different elements into a new or specific way of fielding an army, inspired by a particular setting or event from the grand milieu that is the Horus Heresy. An Age of Darkness Theme might combine units from different army lists, present new Force Organisation charts, Warlord Traits, wargear and character options or modify victory conditions or other mission special rules. The use of Age of Darkness 'Themes' are optional and require the agreement of both players to use.

"I survived Isstvan, and there I shed all fear, for what could possibly remain to be afraid of after that massacre upon those black sands? I survived Tsunami Reef and there shed all faith, for who and what could I cleave to in times such as these? I survived Bentax and there shed all hate, for hatred is a pure thing to be nurtured and cherished and my foes are now beneath my contempt, unworthy of such regard. Now all that I have remaining to me is hope, and I know that this I shall shed last of all, when all else is taken from me."

Legionary Dharonon, formerly of the Legiones Astartes Raven Guard

A Shattered Legions force is a coming together of Space Marines from several different Legions, often in the aftermath of some great betrayal, calamity or defeat. Such forces rely on the charisma, vision or sheer force of will of their leader to hold the disparate elements together, and only under his command are they able to set aside rivalries and work together for a common cause. Shattered Legions are invariably driven by the need to exact vengeance upon an enemy whose deeds brought about their fallen state, and they are forced by circumstance to operate far from established lines of communication and chains of command. Numerous Shattered Legion forces waged their own bitter shadow wars throughout the Age of Darkness, far from the main theatres of conflict and often unknown to the high commanders of either side in Mankind's galactic civil war. The most well known Shattered Legions were those formed in the aftermath of the Isstvan V Dropsite Massacre and which initially consisted of disparate remnants of the Iron Hands, Raven Guard and Salamanders Legions. Later, numerous other such forces would come into being on both sides of the Traitor-Loyalist divide, the fracture between either faction of the civil war far from a clean one.

Building a Shattered Legions Army

- A Shattered Legions force is chosen from the Space Marine Crusade Army list.
- Unlike a conventional Legiones Astartes force, the Primary Detachment in a Shattered Legions army may (and in fact must) include units with different versions of the Legiones Astartes special rule.
- The Primary Detachment must contain elements of at least two different Legions (ie, units with different versions of the Legiones Astartes special rule). In order to take any choices from a specific Legion, the force must contain a Praetor or Centurion (including any Consul types), or suitable HQ special character (see page 205) from the same Legion and each such character taken must be from a different Legion.
- Even though vehicles and some other units in the Legiones Astartes Crusade Army list do not have the Legiones Astartes special rule, it should be made obvious from their paint scheme which Legion they belong to. This is particularly important in the case of Transport vehicles.
- A Shattered Legion army may never include a Primarch or any models with the Legiones Astartes (Blackshields) special rule.
- While most Shattered Legion armies were Loyalists at the beginning of the Age of Darkness, later on, Traitor-aligned forces came into being as well. Therefore, the army should be declared as belonging to the Traitor or the Loyalist faction, and will be subject to the normal limitations and options.

The Whole is Greater than the Sum

Many Shattered Legion forces came into existence in the aftermath of extreme trauma, the Isstvan V Dropsite Massacre being the most infamous, but far from the only example of this. The composite parts of the different Legions represented in their ranks were held together by strong leaders, but should such men fall in battle, the entire force was wont to shatter once more.

So long as the army's Warlord is alive and on the table, units from different Legions treat one another as Sworn Brothers (see the Allies in the Age of Darkness rules). Otherwise, units from different Legions treat one another as Distrusted Allies. In this last instance, only those units from the same Legion as the Warlord can be scoring units.

The Price of Redemption

For the Shattered Legions, retribution was all. In numerous battles, tactical and strategic goals were rendered secondary to the imperative to exact revenge from those who had betrayed them.

Units in a Shattered Legion army are never counted as denial units.

Rites of War

A Shattered Legion army may use Rites of War in the normal way, having access to all the general Rites of War. The army may use a Legion-specific Rite of War if the Warlord has the required version of the Legiones Astartes special rule. In this case, any effects described in the Rite of War as applying to models with a specific version of the Legiones Astartes special rule are applied across the army to all units in it with any version of the Legiones Astartes special rule.

Legion-specific Rules

The following elements of the Legion-specific special rules are ignored by units taken as part of the Shattered Legions army:

- **Iron Hands:** Rigid Tactics.
- **Night Lords:** Seeds of Dissent.
- **Word Bearers:** Charismatic Leadership.
- **Raven Guard:** Flesh over Steel.
- **Ultramarines:** Rigid Chain of Command.
- **Blood Angels:** Host of Angels.
- **White Scars:** To Laugh in Death's Face.

The following Legion-specific special rules are modified as stated when applied to units in a Shattered Legions army.

- The Nights Lords Night Vision special rule applies to all units in the army.
- The Iron Warriors The Bitter End is only used if the Warlord has the Legiones Astartes (Iron Warriors) special rule.
- The Alpha Legion Mutable Tactics and Martial Hubris special rules are only used if the Warlord has the Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion) special rule.
- When using the Ultramarines Interlocking Tactics special rule, the definition of which other units count as Ultramarines units is extended to all Shattered Legion units in the army with the exception of the types stated.

"Once we pursued knowledge in all its myriad forms, from warfare to the philosophies of the ancients. Now the galaxy has imposed upon us this most terrible of truths – as our knowledge increases, so too does our sorrow. All that is good we have willingly learned and now all that remains is to learn that which will bring us only woe."

The Road of Blood (suppressed)

"Already the Imperium is lost, and there can be no victory. There is no just cause left in this war, it has become an incarnation of hate, a beast with its own life and its own hunger, and it will never stop, even though the few survivors be left slaughtering each other with stone knives over the dry bones of the generations before them. Never."

Excerpt from the private diaries of Gideon Lhasha Imperial Governor, Foray-Secundus Executed for Treason in the Solar Purge – 017.M31

Shattered Legions Unique Rite of War: After Isstvan

At Isstvan V, three entire Legions all but ceased to exist. The scattered survivors of each were cast across the northern sectors of the Imperium, and in the weeks that followed, small groups of Iron Hands, Raven Guard and Salamanders coalesced in the darkness. Following the example and vision of Shadrak Meduson, the leader of the Iron Hands Sorrgul Clan, the survivors formed into mixed cells of no more than a thousand Legionaries, each to commit to an all-out campaign of vengeance deep behind the Traitors' lines, prosecuting a bitter shadow war intended to divert enemy resources away from the advance on Terra and to bleed them dry in the process.

Effects

- **Survival of the Fittest:** Legion Veteran Tactical Squads may be taken as non-compulsory Troops.
- **Crucible of Hate:** All units with the Legiones Astartes special rule have Hatred (Traitor Legiones Astartes).
- **Blood Price:** When the Slay the Warlord Secondary Objective is in play, the Shattered Legion army gains not one but D3 Victory points for achieving this objective.

Limitations

- The Primary Detachment must contain a Praetor or Centurion from the Iron Hands, Raven Guard and Salamanders Legions.
- The army may not make use of an Allies, Lords of War or Fortifications Detachment.
- The army may not contain more Legion Tactical Squads than it has Legion Veteran Tactical Squads.

Shattered Legions Unique Rite of War: Hunter-killer Mission

As Loyalist survivor forces scattered across the northern Imperium and beyond, the Warmaster tasked certain elements to hunt them down and slaughter them to a man. Such orders were invariably accompanied by an implicit or explicit threat—return in victory or do not return at all. Thus, these hunter-killer forces were as isolated from their own chains of command as the Loyalists they tracked, and soon a bitter and bloody war developed between hunter and hunted. While most of the Traitor Legions contributed forces to this effort, the Legion that embraced the task with the most relish was undoubtedly the Emperor's Children, those elements not accompanying their Primarch commanding hunts which scoured the void and inflicted unspeakable atrocities upon those Loyalists they were able to corner.

Effects

- **Masters of the Hunt:** Legion Reconnaissance Squads are not subject to the Support Squad special rule and Legion Seeker squads may be taken as non-compulsory Troops choices.
- **Run them Down:** Enemy units that are entirely wiped out earn their army an additional Victory point in missions where Victory points are used to determine the winner. If the unit is destroyed in a Sweeping Advance then not 1 but D3 additional Victory points are awarded.
- **Jaws of the Trap:** When rolling to determine which table edge an Outflanking unit arrives by, if a 6 is rolled, the controlling player may choose to bring the unit into play from any table edge they wish (including the opposing player's or their own table edge).

Limitations

- This Rite of War may only be used by a Shattered Legion belonging to the Traitor faction.
- The army's Warlord must have the Legiones Astartes (Emperor's Children) special rule.
- The army must contain units from at least two different Legions.
- The army may never earn Victory points for controlling Objective markers, terrain or areas of the table.

Shattered Legions Special Characters

When putting together a Shattered Legions army, it should be noted that it is possible to use special characters so long as they have the requisite version of the Legiones Astartes special rule for the detachment they are to be included in. While it is not possible to take a Primarch in a Shattered Legion army, other special characters are more or less appropriate to this type of force. For example, Autek Mor of the Iron Hands and Cassian Dracos of the Salamanders are both featured in the stories presented earlier in this book, and players may like to recreate such battles by including these special characters as their HQs. Other Legiones Astartes special characters might also be appropriate for operating in such forces, such as Kyr Vhalen of the Iron Warriors, Alvarex Maun of the Raven Guard or even Saul Tarvitz of the Emperor's Children (representing a 'speculative' battle fought in the aftermath of his assumed death on Isstvan III). Other characters are less appropriate due to the established story arc of the Horus Heresy and while their inclusion in a Shattered Legion force is not specifically limited, players are certainly encouraged to concoct a reasonable explanation for why they are there. Such characters might include Erebus of the Word Bearers or Eidolon of the Emperor's Children—each of these examples is closely tied to the Primarch of their Legion in some way and therefore far less likely to be leading the type of army represented by the Shattered Legions Theme.

"They have set themselves up as gods, they who once tore down the shrines of the false and the deluded. They who brought the light of truth to the stars, now spread nothing but darkness and sorrow, and for what? Vanity, mere vanity, and we shall all pay in blood."

Transcript 98743# taken from seditious broadcasts Esac Hive, Lorin Alpha Prior to revolt

"Be not afraid of death; fear instead what life holds ever after should you fail."

Attributed to the Unspeakable King

Age of Darkness Theme: Army of Dark Compliance

Age of Darkness Themes are a means of gathering together several different elements into a new or unusual way of fielding an army inspired by a particular setting or event from the grand milieu that is the Horus Heresy. An Age of Darkness Theme might combine units from different army lists, present new Force Organisation charts, Warlord Traits, wargear and character options or modify victory conditions or other mission special rules. The use of Age of Darkness 'Themes' are optional and require the agreement of both players to use.

The Age of Darkness Theme that follows represents an army of mortal soldiers raised to serve the dark vision of Warmaster Horus under the direct command of a Traitor Legiones Astartes war leader. Such forces were often founded to impose '*Dark Compliance*' upon those worlds crushed beneath the heel of the Warmaster. They served as armies of occupation, often being raised from one world to serve on another nearby, ensuring their allegiance to the Traitor cause as they brutally oppressed peoples they had no sympathies for or actively hated. Later on, as the Shattered Legions, Blackshields and other outcast elements prosecuted the shadow wars of the Age of Darkness, these armies of Dark Compliance were used to garrison vital targets that such forces might seek to attack. Dispersed far and wide across the Warmaster's territory and with Traitor Legiones Astartes officers occupying key command positions, they scoured the void itself in search of all who would oppose Horus.

The Army of Dark Compliance is especially appropriate for use in campaigns played using the system presented on page 149, being a natural foe for a Shattered Legion or Blackshields force. It reflects the kind of planetary musters raised and deployed across the Pale Stars by the Alpha Legion Strike Master Ijax as described in the Eye of the Storm chapter, but could be used to represent similar forces under the command of different Traitor Legiones Astartes overlords across the entire civil war-torn galaxy.

Building an Army of Dark Compliance

- The Primary Detachment in an Army of Dark Compliance is chosen using units drawn from both the Legiones Astartes Crusade Army list and the Imperialis Militia and Cults army list.
- The Primary Detachment must contain at least one Legion Praetor or Centurion (including Consuls), who must be the army's Warlord.
- The army may only belong to the Traitor faction.
- The Army of Dark Compliance may not make use of Legiones Astartes Rites of War.
- Any Legiones Astartes special rules that apply to models in the same detachment as the unit with the Legiones Astartes special rule do not apply to Militia units (eg, the Night Lords Night Vision special rule).
- Aside from the above stipulation and where specifically noted (such as in the Sons of Horus Bitter Pride special rule), all units are treated as drawn from the same army list, so may use one another's Transport vehicles, benefit from Warlord Traits, etc.
- The Primary Detachment may never have more units chosen from the Legiones Astartes Crusade Army list than it has units chosen from the Imperialis Militia and Cults army list.
- The Primary Detachment may not contain a Discipline Master Cadre.

The Warmaster's Due

Though the mortal servants of the Warmaster aspired to reap the benefits of service to his vision of the reforged Imperium, in reality they were often used as bait to draw Loyalist attacks or as simple cannon fodder.

Any model with the Legiones Astartes special rule that is a part of this Theme may claim a bonus of +1 to any cover saves granted because of weapons fire passing through any Infantry unit from the Imperialis Militia and Cults army list to reach them (the standard 5+ save allowed for Intervening models becoming a 4+). However, if this bonus is claimed, the Militia unit immediately suffers D3 wounds per unit firing through them against which this save bonus has been claimed. Wounds inflicted in this way are distributed as if the enemy unit against which the cover save bonus has been claimed had fired upon the Militia unit, and have no AP value.

Disposable

The Traitor Legiones Astartes officers who oversaw the Armies of Dark Compliance often factored them into their battle plans as no more than disposable cannon fodder, whose sole tactical value was to die in the service of the Warmaster.

The Disposable special rule given in the unit entry for the Inducted Levy Squad in the Imperialis Militia and Cults army list may be applied to any Militia unit in the army. Units that take this option never count as scoring units or denial units. This option should be declared at the same time that Warlord Traits, psychic powers, etc, are rolled for and if the option is not declared, the rule applies to only Inducted Levy squads.

Sons of Horus Overseer

Muster-Driver Ummaos Ludarch
Sons of Horus Dark Compliance Cadre
Al-Arach Militia Traitor Planetary Muster

Ummaos Ludarch served for over a decade as a squad leader in the Sons of Horus 13th Company under Luc Sedirae, and he took part in the conquest of several dozen worlds, culminating in the Dark Compliance of the world of Dagonet. It was during that operation that Ludarch's commander was slain, it is believed by a clade of assassins dispatched from Terra, and in the aftermath the Sons of Horus launched a vengeance campaign during which many thousands were punished, regardless of their complicity in the assassinations. It was during this period of brutality and punishment that Ummaos Ludarch excelled himself in the eyes of his superiors, leading to him being detached from the 13th Company and assigned command over a Traitor muster of several thousand slave-troops in future campaigns.

Panoply of Tyranny

Muster-Driver Ludarch is depicted here clad in Mark IV Legiones Astartes battle plate, his heraldry, as well as his helm and chest armour, altered by the Legion's master artificers in recognition of his role in leading an entire host of indentured mortal warriors in service of the Warmaster. He wears lodge tokens upon his left shoulder, as well as sigils specific to the lodge to which he belonged upon his right forearm. The totem-skulls worn upon his belt are gold-gilded, a practise that betrays Ludarch's roots in the hyper-violent gangs of the Legion's home world of Cthonia. He bears a whip at his belt which is as much a symbol of his rank as a means of motivating the mortal troops under his command.

Individual Overseer Icon, Unknown Provenance

Sons of Horus Artificer-wrought Legion Armourial

Nathaniel Garro

175 points

Knight-Errant, Former Battle-Captain of the Death Guard 7th Battle Company, The Agentia Primus, Hand of the Sigillite

HQ

The foremost of the Knights-Errant, Nathaniel Garro was once a Battle-Captain of the Legiones Astartes Death Guard. Though he served his Primarch with honour and dedication, he was condemned as unworthy and, along with countless thousands of Legionaries who could not be counted on to tread the path of the Traitor, was betrayed at Isstvan III. Against all odds however Garro survived, escaping on the *Eisenstein* to carry word of the Warmaster's treachery to Terra. It was Garro's warning that forced the Warmaster to abandon his plans for a shock invasion of the Throneworld and instead undertake a grinding advance, affording Terra the opportunity to fortify.

Having renounced his oaths to the Traitor Death Guard, Garro bent knee to Malcador the Sigillite, swearing to undertake whatever mission, no matter how perilous, was called for in the ultimate defence of humanity. The first of many such tasks was to recruit more warriors like himself, the first two dozen or so names provided to Malcador by the Loyalist Luna Wolf Severian. This quest would take Garro and his growing band of Legion-orphans the length and breadth of the galaxy, and bring him into conflict with his fallen battle-brothers of the Traitor Legiones Astartes and other, still more horrifying foes.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Nathaniel Garro	5	5	4	4	3	5	4	10	2+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Paragon bolter
- *Libertas*
- Master-crafted bolt pistol
- The Aquila Imperator
- Artificer armour
- Frag and krak grenades

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes
- Preferred Enemy (Traitor Space Marines)
- Eternal Warrior
- Oath of Moment
- Independent Character
- Precision Shot
- Precision Strike
- Implacable Advance
- By Falsehood Cloaked
- The Emperor Protects

Agents of the Emperor
When using the Age of Darkness Allies matrix, all of the Knights-Errant, including Nathaniel Garro and Tylos Rubio, are counted as Agents of the Emperor.

Any of the Knights-Errant may be taken as non-Compulsory HQ choices in any Loyalist army. They may, however, never be the army's Warlord.

Libertas
It is said that this masterfully wrought broadsword was constructed from remnants of a far older device, a weapon so ancient it predates the fall of Mankind and the coming of Old Night. Whatever the truth, Garro wielded it against countless xenos foes throughout his service in the Great Crusade and, tragically, must now use it to spill the blood of his erstwhile brother Legiones Astartes.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Libertas	-	+1	3	Melee, Rending, Two-handed, Edge of Truth

Edge of Truth: When fighting in a Challenge, every wound that Garro causes on his foe is counted as two for calculating Combat Resolution.

The Aquila Imperator
This grants Garro a 4+ invulnerable save, increased to 3+ when Garro is fighting in a Challenge.

The Emperor Protects
Though he dares not reveal it even to his closest brothers, Nathaniel Garro holds within him the seed of a secret faith, having heard and heeded the words of the *Lectitio Divinitatus*. The central credo of this nascent faith is that the Emperor has the power to watch over those who ask for His protection, a belief that has proven true on more occasions than can be accounted for by mere happenstance.

The first time Garro loses his last wound, make a Leadership test. If the test is passed, he remains in play with a single wound remaining.

By Falsehood Cloaked
The Knights-Errant were gifted by the highest offices of the Mechanicum with many technological artifices, one of the most wondrous and guileful of which was known simply as '*Falsehood*'. Such devices took many different forms and had varying effects, but that used by the Knights-Errant in open battle projected a psycho-luminal sphere about them that distorted their appearance, allowing them to infiltrate the battlefield unseen and, even once detected, made it all but impossible for a foe to draw a bead upon them.

The Knights-Errant may deploy via Deep Strike, and when doing so they do not roll to scatter. On the controlling player's turn that they deploy, and throughout the opposing player's following player turn, any shots made against a Knight-Errant that has deployed in this manner are made as Snap Shots. In addition, any charges made against them during this time count as Disordered.

Paragon Bolter
The Knights-Errant have been outfitted with the finest crafted panoply of arms and armour that the Sigillite's household can procure, the plain grey heraldry belying the peerless quality of the underlying workmanship.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Paragon bolter	24"	4	5	Assault 3, Rending, Master-crafted

Oath of Moment
Every single one of the Knights-Errant has a vital role to play in the Sigillite's far-reaching and secret 'silent war', and each is fated to perform deeds that will echo down the ages. The death of even one of their number represents a terrible loss to the Imperium, and so they are only committed to battle under the direst circumstances in pursuit of the highest strategic objectives.

Fielding a Knight-Errant dramatically alters the victory conditions for the side that includes the model, for the presence of such a fated individual is a sure indication that their mission is of dire import indeed. At the beginning of the game, at the same time that Warlord Traits and psychic powers are determined, an Oath of Moment must be secretly noted down for each model with this special rule. The note is revealed at the end of the game when Victory points are being tallied. Each Oath of Moment represents an objective which that Knight-Errant must achieve, chosen from the list below.

Each of the secret objectives has an associated Victory points score – if the objective is achieved, the Knight-Errant's side earns the indicated number of bonus Victory points in addition to any claimed as part of the mission. If the secret objective is not achieved, the model's side may not claim a victory in the battle, regardless of any other factors.

Crusader.....1 Victory point
The Knight-Errant must end the game within the enemy's deployment zone in order to earn the Oath of Moment Victory points.

Protector.....2 Victory points
Note the identity of another Independent Character in the army. This model must survive the game to earn the Oath of Moment Victory points.

Hand of the Sigillite..... 2/3 Victory points
If objective markers are in play, the Knight-Errant must control one of the objective markers at the end of the game to earn the Oath of Moment Victory points. If the marker is in the enemy deployment zone, this Oath of Moment is worth 3 Victory points instead.

Headsman.....3 Victory points
The Knight-Errant must slay the enemy Warlord in a Challenge in order to earn the Oath of Moment Victory points.

King Slayer.....3 Victory points
If the opposing army includes a Primarch, this model must be slain for the Knight-Errant to earn the Oath of Moment Victory points.

HQ

Tylos Rubio, erstwhile Librarian of the Legiones Astartes Ultramarines, was the first to be recruited into the Knights-Errant by Nathaniel Garro, who upon the Sigillite's order travelled across the entire Imperium to reach Calth at the very moment of the Word Bearers' betrayal of the Calth Conjunction. But Garro had no intention of bolstering the defence and instead sought out the former Librarian and demanded he set aside his oaths to the XIIIth Legion and travel to Terra. Rubio refused, but during subsequent fighting was forced by circumstance to use his psychic powers, which he had foresworn in accordance with the Edict of Nikaea. Though Rubio saved their lives, his battle-brothers turned their backs upon him and he saw he had no choice but accede to Garro's request.

Upon joining the Knights-Errant, Tylos Rubio renounced not just his Legion, but the Edict of Nikaea, donning a psychic hood and taking up his force sword once more. In the battles to come, the ability to predict and counter the powers of the Warp would prove as valuable to the Sigillite's cause as a thousand boltguns.

Tylos Rubio

Knight-Errant, Former Codicier of the Ultramarines

140 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Tylos Rubio	5	5	4	4	2	5	2	10	2+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Artificer armour
- Paragon bolter
- Master-crafted bolt pistol
- Force sword
- Psychic hood
- Iron halo
- Frag and krak grenades

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes
- Pysker (Mastery Level 2). Rubio generates his powers from the Divination and Telekinesis Disciplines.
- Psionic Fury
- Preferred Enemy (Traitors)
- By Falsehood Cloaked
- Oath of Moment
- Implacable Advance
- Precision Shot
- Precision Strike
- Independent Character
- Echoes of Fate

Echoes of Fate
At Calth, Tylos Rubio heard the pre-echo of disaster as the Word Bearers' betrayal approached, yet he rejected it, heeding instead his oath to his Primarch and to the Emperor to uphold the Edict of Nikaea. Having since foresworn that oath and replaced it with one of still greater portent, Rubio now listens for the ever-present ghost-voices that warn of approaching betrayal, knowing that to ignore them as he did at Calth would be to invite still greater a tragedy even than befell that world.

Rubio may re-roll failed Psychic tests when using powers from the Divination Discipline.

Psionic Fury
Rubio carries a force sword (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook), through which he is able to focus his psionic power to an unprecedented degree. Points from the controlling player's Warp Charge pool not expended in the Psychic phase may be used by Rubio in the Assault phase of the same player turn to enhance the Strength of his attacks in close combat. These points are expended on a one-to-one basis so, for example, 2 Warp Charge points carried over to the Assault phase increase the Strength of Rubio's close combat attacks by +2. Any points not converted by the end of Rubio's player turn are lost and may not be carried forward further. Note that the attacks may not be enhanced above Strength 10.

By Falsehood Cloaked
The Knights-Errant were gifted by the highest offices of the Mechanicum with many technological artifices, one of the most wondrous and guileful of which was known simply as '*Falsehood*'. Such devices took many different forms and had varying effects, but that used by the Knights-Errant in open battle projected a psycho-luminal sphere about them that distorted their appearance, allowing them to infiltrate the battlefield unseen and, even once detected, made it all but impossible for a foe to draw a bead upon them.

The Knights-Errant may deploy via Deep Strike, and when doing so they do not roll to scatter. On the controlling player's turn that they deploy, and throughout the opposing player's following player turn, any shots made against a Knight-Errant that has deployed in this manner are made as Snap Shots. In addition, any charges made against them during this time count as Disordered.

Paragon Bolter
The Knights-Errant have been outfitted with the finest crafted panoply of arms and armour that the Sigillite's household can procure, the plain grey heraldry belying the peerless quality of the underlying workmanship.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Paragon bolter	24"	4	5	Assault 3, Rending, Master-crafted

Oath of Moment
Every single one of the Knights-Errant has a vital role to play in the Sigillite's far-reaching and secret 'silent war', and each is fated to perform deeds that will echo down the ages. The death of even one of their number represents a terrible loss to the Imperium, and so they are only committed to battle under the direst circumstances in pursuit of the highest strategic objectives.

Fielding a Knight-Errant dramatically alters the victory conditions for the side that includes the model, for the presence of such a fated individual is a sure indication that their mission is of dire import indeed. At the beginning of the game, at the same time that Warlord Traits and Psychic powers are determined, an Oath of Moment must be secretly noted down for each model with this special rule. The note is revealed at the end of the game when Victory points are being tallied. Each Oath of Moment represents an objective which that Knight-Errant must achieve, chosen from the list below.

Each of the secret objectives has an associated Victory points score – if the objective is achieved, the Knight-Errant's side earns the indicated number of bonus Victory points in addition to any claimed as part of the mission. If the secret objective is not achieved, the model's side may not claim a victory in the battle, regardless of any other factors.

Crusader.....1 Victory point
The Knight-Errant must end the game within the enemy's deployment zone in order to earn the Oath of Moment Victory points.

Protector.....2 Victory points
Note the identity of another Independent Character in the army. This model must survive the game to earn the Oath of Moment Victory points.

Hand of the Sigillite..... 2/3 Victory points
If objective markers are in play, the Knight-Errant must control one of the objective markers at the end of the game to earn the Oath of Moment Victory points. If the marker is in the enemy deployment zone, this Oath of Moment is worth 3 Victory points instead.

Headsman.....3 Victory points
The Knight-Errant must slay the enemy Warlord in a Challenge in order to earn the Oath of Moment Victory points.

King Slayer.....3 Victory points
If the opposing army includes a Primarch, this model must be slain for the Knight-Errant to earn the Oath of Moment Victory points.

Knight-Errant

115 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Knight-Errant	5	5	4	4	2	4	2	10	2+

HQ

The Knights-Errant are an ever-expanding band of elite Legiones Astartes, each and every one an exemplar of the Emperor's vision for the champions of humanity. Each has been tested in myriad trials, from service in the ranks of the Crusader Host to remaining loyal to Terra even when their own Primarch turned Traitor. They are the pinnacle of the Chosen of Malcador, a secret army of mortals and Legiones Astartes entirely dedicated to Malcador's cause which transcends even the immediate concerns of the Horus Heresy and is vital to all that will come after the Traitors are finally cast out.

Having foresworn their oaths to their Legions, the Knights-Errant wear artificer-wrought battle plate scoured to ceramite grey and bearing no sigil other than that of Malcador. Despite renouncing former ties, many Knights-Errant retain some token of their former identity, varying from a simple keepsake of a battle of old to a favoured weapon too potent to set aside. In the aftermath of the fall of Mars, during which the Imperial Fists were able to extricate stockpiles of the new Mark VI Legiones Astartes power armour, the Knights-Errant were equipped with the very finest examples of this class of armour as well as whatever other master-wrought weapons and equipment they required to prosecute the Sigillite's far-reaching Silent War.

Unit Composition
- 1 Knight-Errant

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Paragon bolter
- Master-crafted bolt pistol
- Master-crafted power weapon
- Iron halo
- Artificer armour
- Frag and krak grenades

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes
- Preferred Enemy (Traitors)
- Implacable Advance
- By Falsehood Cloaked
- Independent Character
- Precision Shot
- Precision Strike
- Oath of Moment

Options
- A Knight-Errant may take one of the following:
  - Narthecium ..... +15 points
  - Nuncio-vox ..... +10 points
  - Servo-arm (granting the Battlesmith special rule) ..... +20 points
- A Knight-Errant may take any of the following:
  - Melta bombs ..... +5 points
  - Jump pack ..... +20 points
- A Knight-Errant may replace his power weapon with one of the following:
  - Master-crafted Power fist ..... +5 points
  - A single Master-crafted lightning claw ..... +5 points
- A Knight-Errant may replace his paragon bolter with one of the following:
  - Combi-weapon ..... Free
  - Sniper rifle ..... Free
- A Knight-Errant may replace his master-crafted bolt pistol with one of the following:
  - Master-crafted volkite serpenta ..... +5 points
  - Master-crafted plasma pistol ..... +15 points
- A single Knight-Errant in the army may be given:
  - The Librarian Consul upgrade as per the *Legiones Astartes Crusade Army List* book ..... 20 pts + the cost of Psychic mastery level

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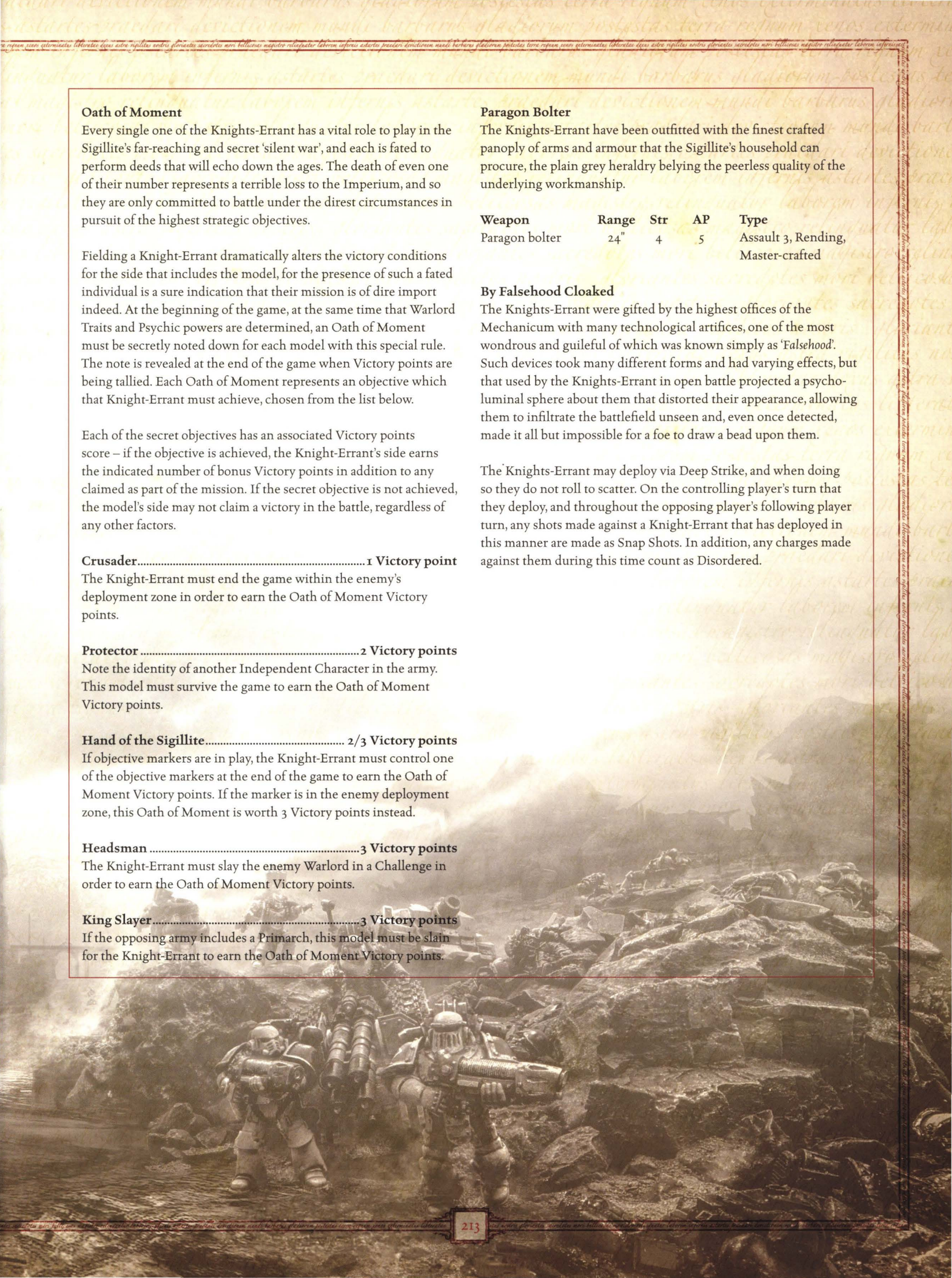


BLACKSHIELDS

"I shall not be by him imprinted, nor by his sin disfigured."

Inscription acid-etched into the armour of unnamed 'Blackshield' Legionary

The term 'Blackshield' refers not to a single military body or even a class of warriors as such, but to a phenomenon that came into being in the early to middle years of the Age of Darkness and which very much had its roots in the most ancient of martial codes. According to those codes, a warrior might, for any one of a myriad reasons, choose or be forced to cast off or conceal his allegiance. In ancient times, when a warrior bore the icon of his house, master or nation upon his shield, he might have cause to cover it with cloth or to paint over it entirely. He might very literally paint his shield black, deliberately making it impossible for strangers to know where his true loyalties — if any remained at all— might lie.

While such a practice might have obvious utility amongst the warring clans and states of Ancient Terra or on any number of worlds cast down to barbarism throughout the long Age of Strife, it had no place at all in the Imperium of Mankind which through Unity and the Imperial Truth the Emperor had brought to the scattered and benighted worlds of humanity. The hosts of Mankind that swept out from Terra during the Great Crusade were bonded by seemingly unbreakable chains of fealty, blood and honour, and so to break oath with a line officer was in effect to break oath with the Emperor and those He had saved from Old Night. With the outbreak of the Horus Heresy however, it was proven beyond doubt that the chain was only as strong as its weakest links.

It cannot be known when the first Blackshields appeared upon the battlefields of the Age of Darkness, and in truth the definition is so broad that some may not have been noted as such at the time. Certainly, a small force of Legiones Astartes warriors clad in black and bearing the Terran Aquila in the stead of any Legion icon was sighted at the climax of the Liberation of Numinal during the war for the Coronid Deeps in early 008.M31. As the veil of Dark Compliance fell across the northern Imperium and beleaguered Loyalist armies fell back en masse before the Traitors' inexorable advance towards distant Terra, Blackshields similarly clad were counted amongst the defenders who mustered upon the walls of Fort Stranivar, giving their lives for the Loyalist cause alongside so many other dutiful and stoic servants of the Emperor.

These incidents were but the first of many that would be reported across the entire Imperium as the Age of Darkness progressed, although in most instances such reports would only be collated into a meaningful whole much later on, long after the fate of most such warriors was either settled or irrelevant. Warbands of Blackshields appeared in war zones the length and breadth of the sundered Imperium, evidence not of one overarching will or cause, but of the resurrection of that ancient code that called for a warrior to obscure his colours upon the renunciation of his oaths of allegiance to his master.

While many groups of Blackshields were identified, no two were exactly the same in origin or constitution. While the term invariably describes a warrior of the Legiones Astartes, even this is not universal as the origins and nature of some Blackshields simply cannot be ascertained, while others were accompanied by mortal auxiliaries in a manner similar to the Legions' employment of bonded auxiliary units. Likewise, the true allegiance of many Blackshield bands was often far from clear. Even when their deeds spoke clearly of their cause, they rarely fought alongside the conventional forces of either side in Mankind's civil war or when they did, they refused to integrate themselves into established chains of command. Many Blackshield bands simply fought for their own cause—often that of simple survival in a galaxy consumed by insanity and chaos. Some however had clearly abandoned themselves to the very madness that had birthed them. Gripped by an insanity that knew no distinction between Traitor or Loyalist, they ravaged across the stars throughout the Age of Darkness and in many cases well into the current age.

Some have compared the Blackshields to the Shattered Legions, thus putting truth to the observation that the two occupied different points in a spectrum of irregular or non-conventional Legiones Astartes forces. The disparate elements of the Shattered Legions, however, maintained a definite sense of Legion identity and inheritance, while the Blackshields invariably went to great lengths to reject, denounce or obscure their origins, or in some cases may even have been ignorant of them. Indeed, while the Shattered Legions were constituted of units from several different parent Legions, they ever sought to uphold and maintain their own traditions even as they acknowledged those of their compatriots. This was not the case in most Blackshield bands, and it is likely that even individual squads were made up of warriors born of different Legions, the identity of which might remain unknown even to his brothers.

While the term 'Blackshield' is fitting, it was not always a literal description of the warriors in question. Some groups were observed clad in highly idiosyncratic, personalised heraldry, no two Legionaries bearing the same colours. Some applied camouflage patterns to their armour, a practice only rarely observed amongst the Legions. At least one group was observed to wear composite battle plate, each part scavenged from other Legions and mixed together with no rhyme or reason, a sea green vambrace taken from a slain Legionary of the Sons of Horus worn alongside a bone white gorget torn from the corpse of a defeated World Eater, for example.

The Steadfast, the Turncoat and the Renegade

The most difficult class of Blackshield to define or identify with any certainty were those who were constituted en masse from the ranks of a parent Legion having refused to align themselves with the declared allegiance of their Primarch. Though their true numbers remain unknown, they cannot have been great for most of the Traitor Primarchs proved horrifyingly willing and able to purge their Legions of those sons they suspected would not stand alongside them against the Emperor. It is well known to us now that the Sons of Horus, Death Guard, World Eaters and Emperor's Children were all purged by the hands of their own fathers at Isstvan III, while it appears that Lorgar rid his Legion of such elements at a much earlier point. Of the other Traitor Legions, it can only be assumed that similar fratricides were enacted, although none appear to have been carried out with complete effectiveness for there were ever detached units serving far afield or beyond communications range. What trauma such warriors experienced upon learning of their masters' treachery can only be imagined and the bloodshed that ensued between brother Legionaries must have been every bit as terrible as the slaughter at Isstvan III.

Many of those warriors who escaped the betrayal of their kin fled into the darkness and were never seen again, while others embarked upon short-lived campaigns of bloody vengeance, determining to sell their lives dearly and consumed by hatred for a galaxy in which they no longer had a place.

The Disavowed

It is a truth that sits ill with many who are party to such knowledge that not all Blackshields were the sons of Traitor Primarchs. The warrior lodges had spread their pernicious philosophies far and wide in the years prior to Isstvan, and few indeed were the Legions entirely unaffected by their hidden workings. Indeed, it is notable that in some bands of Blackshields, adherence to the tenets of the various warrior lodges remained strong and some were even accompanied by small covens of Davinite lodge priests. How many Blackshield bands were in fact renegade elements of otherwise loyal Legions, or how many individual Blackshield warriors in the ranks of a Marauder squad were secretly turncoat sons of Guilliman, Dorn, Russ or any other loyal son of the Emperor is a matter that even now has yet to be fully accounted.

The Damned

Despite their rejection of visible Legion heritage, most Blackshields remained nonetheless recognisable as Space Marines. A small number however stretched such a definition to a point where onlookers may not have taken them for the product of the Emperor's vision at all. Throughout the Age of Darkness and beyond, accounts of Legionaries fallen to physical mutation persisted, hinting at a creeping instability in gene-seed purity, corruption of the implantation process, exposure to certain influences or even deliberate tampering with the Legiones Astartes genetic template. At first sight these warriors might appear blessed of superior strength, speed or resilience, but invariably they proved unstable in other ways. Some were prone to physical or mental collapse in the heat of battle, while others experienced spontaneous and uncontrolled mutation under stress, their limbs distending into horrific forms as bones re-knit and muscles distorted, battle plate splitting apart in the process. Some were indistinguishable in appearance from any other Legionary, yet possessed of such an unnatural mien or aura that others could not stand their presence, and with prolonged exposure would be driven by an inexplicable urge to strike them down.

It has been suggested by some of our Order that not every band of such genetic aberrations classified as Blackshields were truly outcasts from the other Legions. Some may actually have been deliberately created in secret within one of the Legions and then released into the war-torn galaxy as living weapons of mass destruction. Created ignorant of their heritage, such forces would have reaved across the stars in pursuit of some implanted imperative, burning fiercely albeit briefly in the depths of the Age of Darkness.

Command Hierarchy

If the Shattered Legions were irregular in their command structure, the myriad bands of Blackshields were downright idiosyncratic. Many appear to have been ruled by sheer brute strength or force of will with no apparent reference to any formal rank their leaders may once have held. What qualified a leader to rule a Blackshield warband can only be guessed at, but it has been observed that the fate of many such bands was intrinsically linked to their master's own goals.

Aside from the reaver lords, most Blackshield bands exhibited a comparatively flat organisational hierarchy. The reaver lords invariably led their warriors from the front and because overall strengths were rarely more than a single Legiones Astartes company equivalent, the line officers, specialised sub-ranks, command cadres and equerries utilised across the Legions were largely superfluous and therefore rarely seen among Blackshields.

Materiel Strength

Observed strengths among Blackshield warbands varied from as few as two dozen to as many as 2,000, with around 500 being the most commonly encountered level. No recognisable orders of battle dominated and each force was constituted according to the demeanour of its lord, its warriors and the logistical limitations imposed upon them by fate. While recognisable Legiones Astartes squad types were encountered, it was common for the core squads of Blackshield groups to carry a wide range of equipment, often with no two warriors being armed in the same manner. This phenomenon set the warriors of the Blackshields far apart from their Legiones Astartes roots and such squads came to be known as '*Marauders*' as the Age of Darkness progressed.

The strength of most Blackshield warbands was very much concentrated in its core infantry elements, for, divorced from conventional Legion logistical chains, stocks of heavy equipment very quickly dwindled. It was rare indeed for such groups to utilise disposable equipment such as drop pods, for recovering such items for re-use generally called for support assets the Blackshields did not have ready access to. Instead of drop pods, most Blackshield warbands relied upon the lighter classes of gunships to transport forces to a planet's surface and to provide them with fire support, Storm Eagles and Fire Raptors being commonly encountered, and it is likely that many Blackshield bands prioritised their capture from enemy forces.

Given the circumstances of their creation and the manner in which they operated, it has proved impossible to assay the total number of Legiones Astartes warriors turned Blackshield who fought throughout the Age of Darkness. Given that some may have come into being as a result of accelerated implantation regimes or unsanctioned replication protocols and therefore never entered on the official rolls of the later Great Crusade, the numbers may be far higher than any could imagine, albeit spread across the unimaginably vast reaches of the galaxy over which Mankind sought dominion.

The Blackshields

The term 'Blackshield' came to be used during the period of the Horus Heresy known as the Age of Darkness to cover a wide range of Space Marine outcasts, marauders and those Legiones Astartes of uncertain allegiances or origin. Mystery and suspicion attached themselves to such warriors regardless of their true loyalties or intentions, and while some did deliberately scour their old heraldry from their armour or replace it with some false device or heraldry of their own, their name of Blackshield was often a literal description for armour over-masked or simply scorched black.

Though never existing in numbers so great as the Legions from which they had no doubt sprang —far from it— each faction and band, from the dozen survivors of a deadly betrayal by their own kind who cast aside the past, to the cohort of rapidly indoctrinated initiates thrust into battle for a cause they barely understood in power armour empty of livery, had their own place in the tapestry of galaxy-wide destruction that was the Horus Heresy.

The motivations and goals of those forces dubbed Blackshields by the warlords of the era and the historians of later times were as individual as their bands. Many ultimately can be categorised as believing (rightly or wrongly) that their Legion or Primarch was no more, or on the opposite side of the coin renounced their Legion and their sire, refusing to follow his example in siding with one faction or the other in Mankind's galactic civil war. In such ways did so-called 'traitors' draw Traitor blood and —albeit more rarely— did scions of Legions that remained steadfastly loyal turn upon their Emperor and their brothers. The more shadowy and less understood of the Blackshield factions remained cloaked under a shroud of misdirection and secrecy. These were Legionaries created using dangerously accelerated or forbidden chimeric gene-seed implantation and brutally expedited psycho-indoctrination protocols to quickly replace catastrophic losses as the certainties of the early years of the war gave way to the grim realisation that neither side might have enough Space Marines and materiel to overwhelm the other, such was the accelerating rate of slaughter. This practice was utilised by both Loyalist and Traitor, and while many programs were put into place for the Legions to accelerate recruitment by the Legions themselves, other, darker and more hidden endeavours were undertaken by the powers of both sides outside the 'legitimate' framework of the Legions that had gone before, uncaring of established practice or tradition, or indeed risk, needing only results.

Of those Blackshields who were truly rogue, many still fought their war with a bitter fervour that matched any zealot in either the Warmaster's or the Emperor's cause. While others, perhaps starting on their path through a simple drive to survive, became reavers and renegades intent upon forging their own destinies among the stars. Of these some began to corrode in mind and spirit as time and the tide of war ground on, degenerating into little more than madmen and wanton killers, while others eventually regained a place, although often a distrusted one, in the order of battle of one great faction or the other before the end. Of those who did not, most would find the Scouring that was to follow their bloody ending, or be driven into the darkness beyond known space.

"It has long been said that truth is a casualty of war, but so can lies, long and dearly held, also find their death in war's embrace. Take for example our noble Legiones Astartes before their fall from grace, so resplendent in their bold heraldry, so sure in their vaunted martial traditions and so comfortable in their petty rivalries. Most of all, so blissfully secure in the lie that they were on a sacred and virtuous mission, and that their father had created them as men.

So tragic, so pathetic.

Now has come war and shown us… shown them if they have the wit to see it, the truth; that they are weapons, nothing more, not men, merely puppets made to kill and do it very well — made to kill, and never ask why."

The Renegade Rogue Trader
Mortdecai Hope

Exerted Transcript
of Trial Depositions
Circa>019.M31

Legiones Astartes (Blackshields)
The following alternative Legiones Astartes special rule represents the most extreme of the Blackshield Space Marine forces; those who have either thrown aside the traditions and fighting styles of the Legion that bore them in favour of the asymmetrical tactics and brutal expediency of the reaver and marauder, or who have simply been forced to adapt on their own without the guiding hand of a Legion command structure to regulate them. Regardless, they remain Space Marines; genetically engineered, psycho-indoctrinated warriors with superhuman abilities and minds and souls tempered for war.

- Units with this special rule may always attempt to Regroup normally regardless of casualties.
- Units will also have additional special rules and abilities as described below.

Blackshield Special Rules
Blackshield forces have a number of special rules which reflect their unusual make-up, goals and irregular organisation compared to most Space Marine forces, which can serve as both an advantage and disadvantage in battle.

- **Wrought by War:** Each Blackshield force has its own reason for existing and its own particular origin, which is reflected in how it fights. Each Blackshield Detachment may, if its owning player wishes, select one of the Wrought by War special rules detailed later in this section.
- **Strike only from a Position of Strength:** Most Blackshield forces cannot afford to engage in attrition warfare, nor strike unless they have the advantage of surprise for fear of unsustainable losses. An army whose Primary Detachment has the Legiones Astartes (Blackshields) special rule may add +1 to the dice whenever rolling to see which player takes the first turn in a game.
- **Outcasts:** Models with the Legiones Astartes (Blackshields) special rule may be chosen as Allies and take Allies in the normal way with the following provisions: They are counted as By the Emperor's (or the Warmaster's) Command when fighting alongside other Legiones Astartes forces (whether Traitor or Loyalist). When taken alongside other forces (such as Omnissiah Taghmata or Imperialis Militia), they are counted as Fellow Warriors (representing other outcast members of these factions caught up in the fires of the civil war).
- **Limited Resources:** Blackshield forces are no longer or were never part of a structured Legion and so do not follow any recognisable Legion chain of command, and have therefore been forced to fight in a less regimented but arguably far more flexible manner than a regular Space Marine Legion force. In addition, they do not maintain stocks of 'expendable' war engines (such as Drop Pods, which must be recovered and refurbished by specialist support units after deployment).
  - The army never uses Rites of War, but may still use the alternative Age of Darkness Force Organisation charts.
  - The following Legiones Astartes units are unavailable to a Blackshield detachment: Legion Praetor, Legion Command Squad, Legion Tactical Squad, Legion Drop Pod, Legion Dreadnought Drop Pod, and Deathstorm Drop Pod.
  - A Blackshields Detachment may only include a single Legion Consul.
  - A Blackshield Detachment may never have more units with the Vehicle type than it has units with the Infantry type, excluding Dedicated Transports.

"We are mighty because we are right. We are not right because we are mighty. Vile is the hour when that reversal becomes our credo."

Kyril Sindermann,
Primary Iterator
Secret Writings

"If they come, I shall stand. If they fight me I will not yield. Even should they slay me, I swear that even should it contravene all that is worthy and all that is true, I shall return from whatever pit constrains me and I shall fight them anew, until every one of them I drag into that pit with me."

Unidentified Blackshield Legionary, the Siege of Portresh

Blackshield Specific Units

In addition to those found in the Crusade Army list (subject to the previous restrictions), a Blackshield detachment has access to additional units: Blackshield Marauders (which are a Troops choice on the Force Organisation chart). In addition, it has a specific HQ choice, the Reaver Lord, and a new Consul type, the Dark Herald, which are unavailable to other Space Marine forces and which in the case of the Reaver Lord replaces the Legion Praetor normally available to the Space Marine Crusade army.

A Note on Allegiances: While their specific allegiances may not always have been evident and their causes sometimes only tangentially aligned, a Blackshield army should still be declared as belonging to either the Loyalist or the Traitor faction before the game begins. This is because models in the opposing army might have rules that only come into play when facing one side or the other.

Wrought by War

It was said of the numerous bands of Blackshields that fought throughout the Age of Darkness that no two were exactly alike and that each came into being in unique circumstances. Despite this, most Blackshield bands can be broadly categorised in their origins and as such, the owning player may choose one of the following special rules to apply to their entire detachment: Note that while these Wrought by War special rules provide particular unique advantages, they all also have specific disadvantages and limitations, and so cost no additional points for your army.

Death Seekers

These Blackshields are motivated by an all-consuming drive to offer up their own lives upon the altars of war. Psychologically unstable, either as a result of what they have witnessed or endured or through brutally enforced and accelerated psycho-indoctrination, death has become the centre of their being, either as a blessed release, sought-for atonement or programmed obsession, but they will not meet death vainly and without taking as many of the foe with them as they can. Through sheer force of will or other more malign influence, such as prohibited gene-seed experimentation, they are able to shrug off otherwise debilitating injury as they abandon themselves to the anarchy of battle.

- **Inured to Pain:** The unit gains the Feel No Pain (6+) special rule, and does not need to take Pinning tests or Morale checks as a result of taking casualties from shooting attacks.
- **The Lure of the Battle:** The unit may not voluntarily fail a Morale check and must pass a Leadership test in order to end the Movement further from any visible enemy model than it was at the beginning of the phase. If this test is failed, the unit moves D6" towards the closest enemy target instead, stopping 1" away from enemy models. Units inside buildings, fortifications and Transports are not subject to this involuntary movement.

Orphans of War

Having seen betrayal, atrocity and unthinkable carnage at the behest of distant and uncaring masters, these warriors are hardened veterans who have survived against all odds and now trust only in the man next to them in the line of battle. For brothers they will fight and die and strive to see another dawn, but for great cause or Primarch, and the lies and whispers of lords and potentates alike, they have nothing but scorn.

- **Non-Character models with this special rule:** When within 6" of another unit of at least five friendly models with the Legiones Astartes (Blackshields) special rule, the unit gains +1 Leadership (to a maximum of 10), and can re-roll all failed To Hit rolls of a 1 during the Shooting phase and Assault phase. They may not however benefit from the Leadership value of other models, and if they fail a Morale check in the Assault phase, D3 models from the unit are removed as casualties in addition to any other effects.
- **Character models with this special rule:** Gain the Preferred Enemy (Character) special rule.
- **No Gods, No Masters:** Blackshield Detachments with this special rule cannot include Chaplain Consuls, Agents of the Imperium or Agents of the Warmaster, and cannot ally with any Space Marine Legion Detachment which does so (or contains a Primarch).

Outlanders

These Space Marines have seen the depths to which both sides in Mankind's civil war will sink to in order to destroy the other, and they have washed their hands of either side and are now pursuing their own goals, having turned towards the path of the marauder and void corsair to determine their fate. For some who have previously served in the nomad-predation fleets and the flotillas of the Rogue Traders at the forefront of the Great Crusade's darkest frontiers, this may be merely a reversion to a path well-travelled in the past, although with themselves as master, while others will have been forced into exile by the wroth of enemy and one-time ally alike.

- **Void Reavers:** Before the game begins, up to half of the detachment's infantry units without Dedicated Transports may be given the Deep Strike special rule and enter play via Reserve. However, should a Deep Strike mishap be suffered, the unit loses D3 models as casualties in addition to any other effects.
- **Unsanctioned Weaponry:** Any model with this special rule in the detachment with access to a combi-bolter as an upgrade or option may instead take a xenos deathlock for +8 points or may exchange a combi-bolter they already possess for a xenos deathlock for +3 points. Any character model that does not already do so in the detachment has access to rad grenades as an option for +10 points each.
- **The Shadow of Oblivion:** Make a note of how many units are in your army at the start of the game with this special rule and make this total known to your opponent at the start of the game. Once half of these units have been either destroyed or are Falling Back, this special rule takes effect. At the beginning of every subsequent Game Turn, their controlling player must make a Leadership test for each unit with this special rule remaining. If it fails, the unit is removed from play and counts as destroyed.

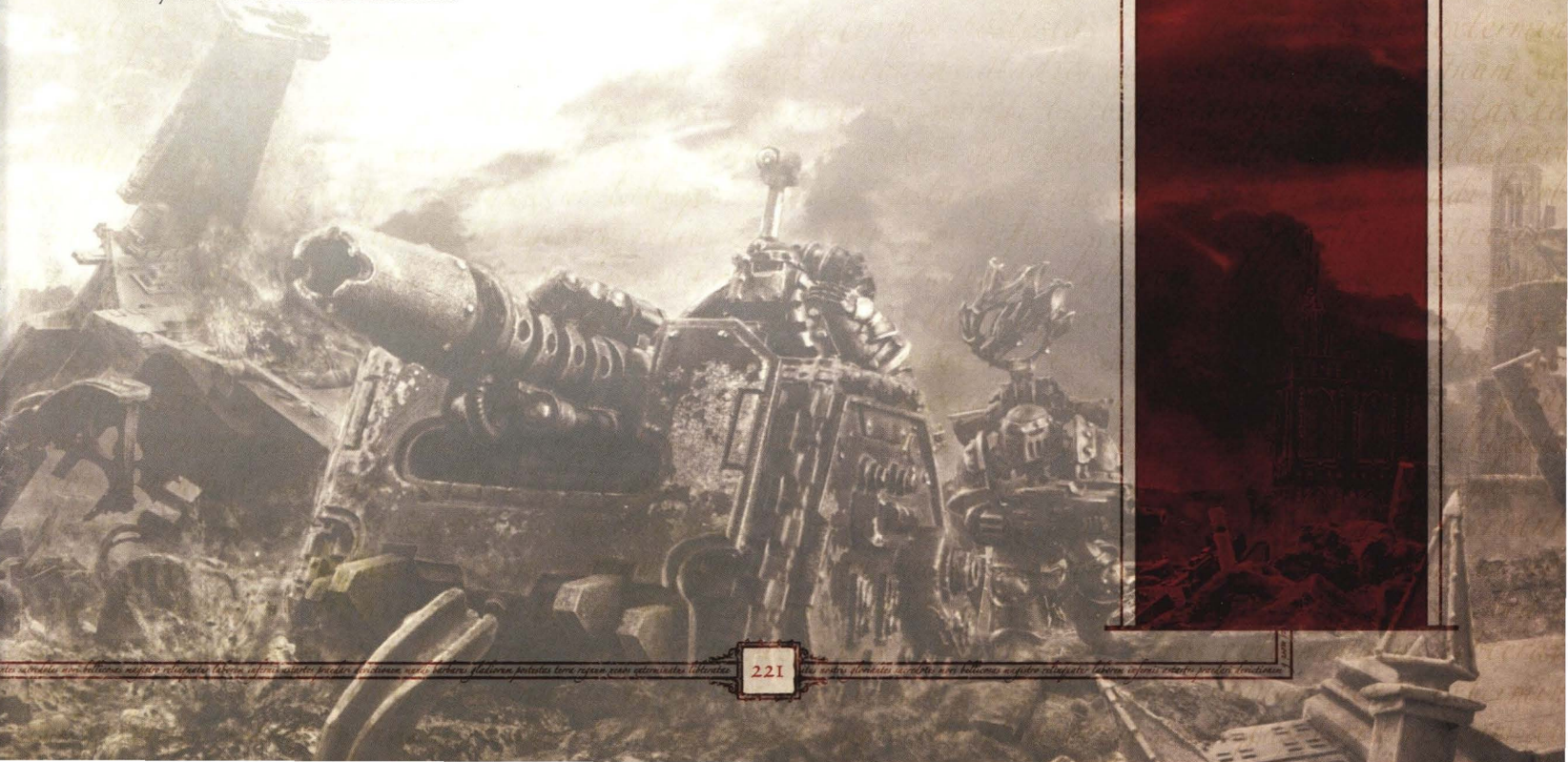
Chymeriae

As the Age of Darkness progressed so there came into being Legiones Astartes who simply should not have existed. Some were the by-blows of failed rapid implantation and psycho-indoctrination programs, others the product of prohibited experimentation on gene-seed stock or the influence of malign forces from beyond. Most often the cause for such 'Chymeriae' creation was to create a breakthrough that would see their faction, Loyalist or Traitor, gain a decisive edge in the war; a goal which for some any taboo or stricture was worth breaking. All, be they Primarch or master apothecary, who attempted this soon learned the folly of their error. Such warriors were at best invariably unstable or unpredictable when compared to those Legiones Astartes brought into being by conventional means, while others succumbed to irreparable madness or cancerous mutation as terrifying to behold as it was ultimately fatal.

- **Chymeriae Attributes:** At the start of the game before set-up, the model's owning player must declare which one of the following combination of bonuses and penalties applies to all units in the affected detachment with this special rule:
  - **Option 1:** +1 Strength, +1 Toughness, -1 Initiative, -1" Charge and Run distance, may not make Sweeping Advances.
  - **Option 2:** +1 WS, +1 BS, -2 Ld.
  - **Option 3:** The unit gains the Fear, Fleet and Rage special rules, -1 BS, must always make Sweeping Advances if able to.
- **Shunned and Distrusted:** A Legiones Astartes (Blackshields) Primary Detachment with this special rule may not have an Allied Detachment.

"I should rather fall in honour and glory than live in dishonour and treachery, but in truth that decision is not mine to make. Rather, it has been made for me, by one I once held above all others and whose name shall never pass my lips again."

Unidentified Blackshield, thought formerly of the Sons of Horus



Blackshield Specific Equipment

The nature of the Blackshield forces and their often erratic and unorthodox lines of supply forced many into the adoption of ragged and modified equipment and weapons in order to maintain an effective fighting force.

'Pariah' Wargear

Various Blackshield groups were observed throughout the Age of Darkness to wield arms and armour obviously field-modified in a variety of ways, sometimes simply to keep it functioning in the isolated conditions under which such forces operated, but often to improve its performance in some manner. Such modifications were not authorised by Legiones Astartes battle doctrine and often in flagrant contradiction of the laws of the Cult of the Machine. Such weaponry came to be known as '*pariah*' wargear, a term indicative of the outcast status of those who implemented such modifications.

Pariah wargear may be chosen as a direct replacement of the base type, by any unit with access to it, for the same cost. For example, a unit that is taken equipped with power armour may replace this with Pariah power armour at no additional cost, while a squad with access to flamers may, having purchased the weapons, exchange them for Pariah flamers for no additional cost. When taking Pariah wargear options, all eligible weapons in the unit must be upgraded in the same way.

Pariah Power Armour

Some Blackshield forces were observed to modify their power armour in a manner not prescribed by any doctrine of the Legiones Astartes. By stripping back reactor casings, re-routing power couplings and foregoing components such as gauntlets, motive stabilisers, vambraces, pauldrons or helm, the wearer is afforded a combination of power and dexterity not provided by standard patterns, albeit at the expense of some protection against heavy weapons fire.

Pariah power armour confers a 3+ armour save except that it decreases its protection to 5+ against weapons with a Strength of 6 or higher whose AP is not sufficient to bypass the armour normally. Models so equipped may Snap Shot with Pistol, Rapid Fire, and Assault weapons in the same Shooting phase in which they Run, shooting once the move is completed.

Blackshield Marauder Additional Weapons

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Lascarbine/autogun	24"	3	-	Rapid Fire
Laslock	18"	4	-	Assault 1

Pariah Bolter

Though it grieves those inducted into the mysteries of the machine, some Blackshields have learned to strip the iconic bolter of its casing and any extraneous fittings in order to make it easier to handle during the fury of a charge or the tumult of a Zone Mortalis engagement.

Weapon	Str	AP	Range	Type
Pariah bolter	4	5	16"	Assault 2

If a charge is made in the same player turn that a model from the unit fired with this weapon, the charge will count as Disordered.

Pariah Flamer

These weapons, produced from battle-damaged and field-repaired units, have been modified by their bearers to remove safety cut-offs, allowing a greater volume of fuel to be fired, albeit at risk and with less regularity of pressure than standard issue Imperial flamers. Such protocols are not approved by the battle doctrines of the Legiones Astartes and are in contravention of the laws of the Cult Mechanicus.

Weapon	Str	AP	Range	Type
Pariah flamer	3	5	Template	Assault 1, Overpressure

Overpressure: A weapon with the Overpressure special rule may be fired at Str 4 and with the Torrent and Gets Hot special rules. The Overpressure special rule may not be used to fire Overwatch.

Xenos Deathlock

There exist many terrifyingly powerful xenos technology weapons encountered during the Great Crusade, which, though incredibly effective, have been declared prohibited by Mechanicum and Emperor alike for their detrimental effects on the body and mind of a human wielder. The desperation of certain Blackshield forces, however, has overcome such concerns. Those weapons sought out by certain groups of Blackshields are prized for the trauma they inflict upon the foe—enemies not torn apart by their horrifying effect are assailed by a storm of soul-wrenching alien horror. Such weapons have been encountered in a range of classes, such as the extinction carbines of the Khrave or the psycho-mobius claw-guns of the Kala Sistrum being the most commonly sought after amongst Blackshield forces.

Weapon	Str	AP	Range	Type
Xenos deathlock	5	5	18"	Assault 2, Deathlock, Lethal Exposure

Deathlock: A unit that has suffered one or more wounds from a weapon with the Deathlock special rule must take a Leadership test at the end of the Shooting phase before any Pinning tests or Morale checks are taken. The test has a negative modifier equal to the number of wounds the target unit suffered with the Deathlock effect that turn. If the unit is Stubborn or Fearless, the test is still taken but without the negative modifiers for casualties caused. If the test is failed, the unit immediately suffers D6 extra wounds which may be saved normally.

Lethal Exposure: If a unit fires one or more weapons with this special rule in the Shooting phase, roll 2D6. If the roll result is less than the number of deathlock shots fired by the unit in that phase, the unit suffers a wound with no armour saves on a model selected by its owning player. Do not roll for Lethal Exposure in the case of Overwatch fire.

Blackshield Chymeriae

Unidentified Blackshield
Blackshield Group Codified 'Gerasene Host'
Northern Sulphur Desert, Treab's World

Depicted here is an unnamed warrior of a little known Blackshield group codified as the Gerasene Host. The Host appear to be the result of rapid, unsanctioned gene-seed hybridisation processes first encountered in the middle period of the Heresy. The source of the Host's gene-seed is unknown and the warriors themselves appeared unaware of their true lineage. Some strategio-savants have posited that the Host were created as a living terror weapon, wrought by an unknown hand and released into the galaxy to sow death and destruction in the ultimate furtherance of the Traitors' cause.

Treab's World

The warrior depicted here fought in the Treab's World campaign, a conflict that burned for four long years and which ultimately drew in and defeated a large contingent of the Salamanders Legion. While the Host operated independently, its strategies were in retrospect clearly co-aligned with those of the Death Guard and Emperor's Children forces also deployed to Treab's World.

The warrior wears production Mark V Legiones Astartes power armour, its source unknown. It has never borne the heraldry of any Legion and beneath the accrued weathering of a long campaign displays the bare metallic grey of unadorned ceramite. The markings are typical of the Host, each applied by the bearer and representing what appear to be arcane and idiosyncratic glyphs of unknown provenance. The 'L' sigil on the right shoulder pauldron was worn by most warriors of the Host, its significance unclear to Imperial savants.

'Gerasene Host' Armourial Icon

Blackshield Individual Markings (Unknown Significance)

Blackshield Reaver Lord

130 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Reaver Lord	6	5	4	4	3	5	4	10	3+

HQ

Once an officer in one of the Emperor's Legions, treachery and fate have caused this warrior to obscure his erstwhile heraldry and to pursue another path entirely. It is around such men that bands of Blackshields invariably coalesce, for they are possessed of a fierce mien and fate visibly rests upon their shoulders. While many appear to fight because they know no other existence, a few are said to be following some far grander strategy that only they are able to perceive.

There exists no standard type among Reaver Lords, for each is an individual uniquely shaped by the circumstance that caused him to renounce whichever of the Legions had sired him. They rule their bands with the utmost authority, either through brute force or charisma. All are fearsome and accomplished warriors, warleaders and strategists, the skills they once brought to bear in service to the Great Crusade now turned to the cause of carving their own fates in a galaxy drowning in the blood of its ending.

Unit Composition
- 1 Blackshield Reaver Lord

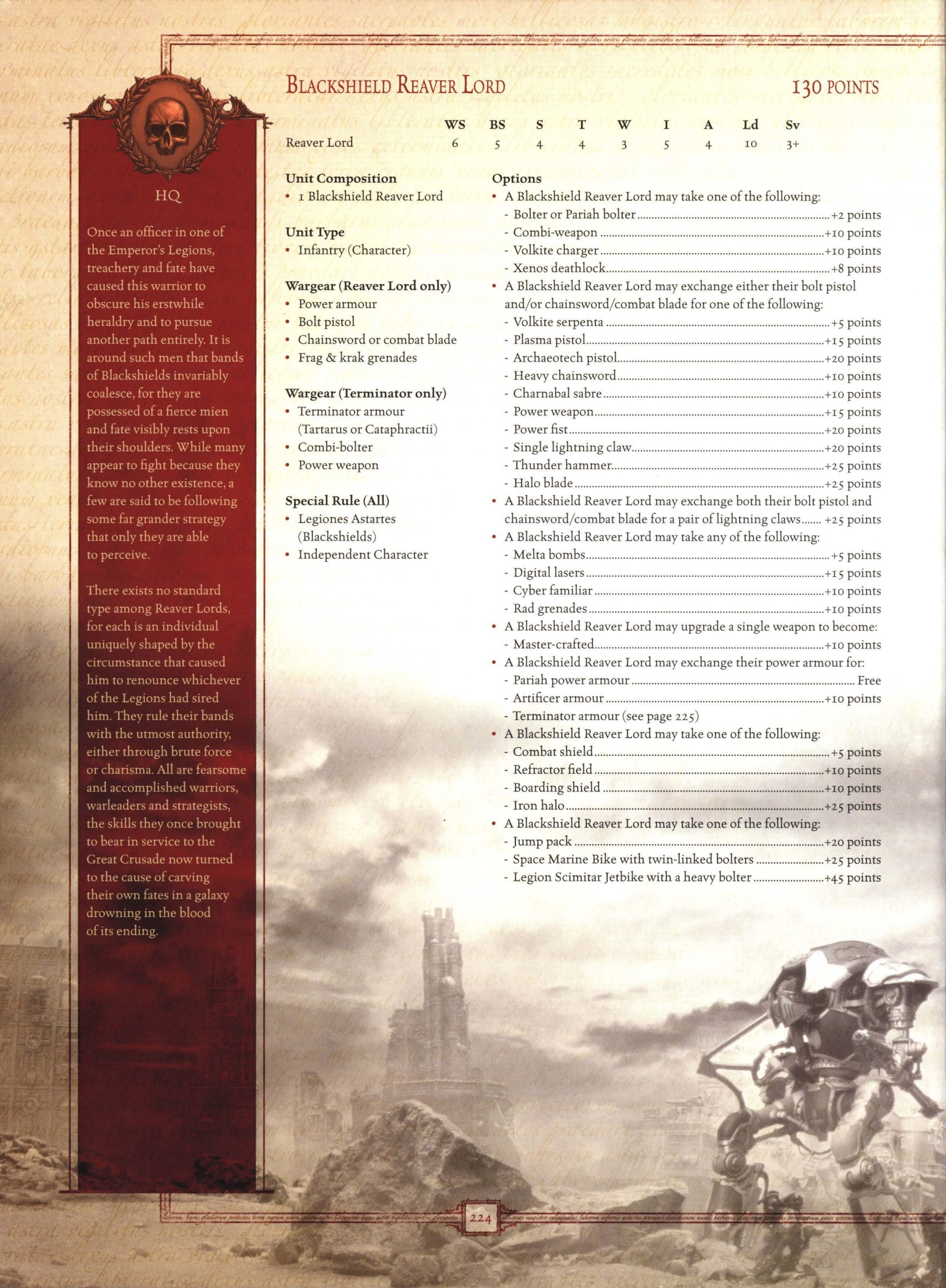
Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear (Reaver Lord only)
- Power armour
- Bolt pistol
- Chainsword or combat blade
- Frag & krak grenades

Wargear (Terminator only)
- Terminator armour (Tartarus or Cataphractii)
- Combi-bolter
- Power weapon

Special Rule (All)
- Legiones Astartes (Blackshields)
- Independent Character

Options
- A Blackshield Reaver Lord may take one of the following:
  - Bolter or Pariah bolter ..... +2 points
  - Combi-weapon ..... +10 points
  - Volkite charger ..... +10 points
  - Xenos deathlock ..... +8 points
- A Blackshield Reaver Lord may exchange either their bolt pistol and/or chainsword/combat blade for one of the following:
  - Volkite serpenta ..... +5 points
  - Plasma pistol ..... +15 points
  - Archaeotech pistol ..... +20 points
  - Heavy chainsword ..... +10 points
  - Charnabal sabre ..... +10 points
  - Power weapon ..... +15 points
  - Power fist ..... +20 points
  - Single lightning claw ..... +20 points
  - Thunder hammer ..... +25 points
  - Halo blade ..... +25 points
- A Blackshield Reaver Lord may exchange both their bolt pistol and chainsword/combat blade for a pair of lightning claws ..... +25 points
- A Blackshield Reaver Lord may take any of the following:
  - Melta bombs ..... +5 points
  - Digital lasers ..... +15 points
  - Cyber familiar ..... +10 points
  - Rad grenades ..... +10 points
- A Blackshield Reaver Lord may upgrade a single weapon to become:
  - Master-crafted ..... +10 points
- A Blackshield Reaver Lord may exchange their power armour for:
  - Pariah power armour ..... Free
  - Artificer armour ..... +10 points
  - Terminator armour (see page 225)
- A Blackshield Reaver Lord may take one of the following:
  - Combat shield ..... +5 points
  - Refractor field ..... +10 points
  - Boarding shield ..... +10 points
  - Iron halo ..... +25 points
- A Blackshield Reaver Lord may take one of the following:
  - Jump pack ..... +20 points
  - Space Marine Bike with twin-linked bolters ..... +25 points
  - Legion Scimitar Jetbike with a heavy bolter ..... +45 points



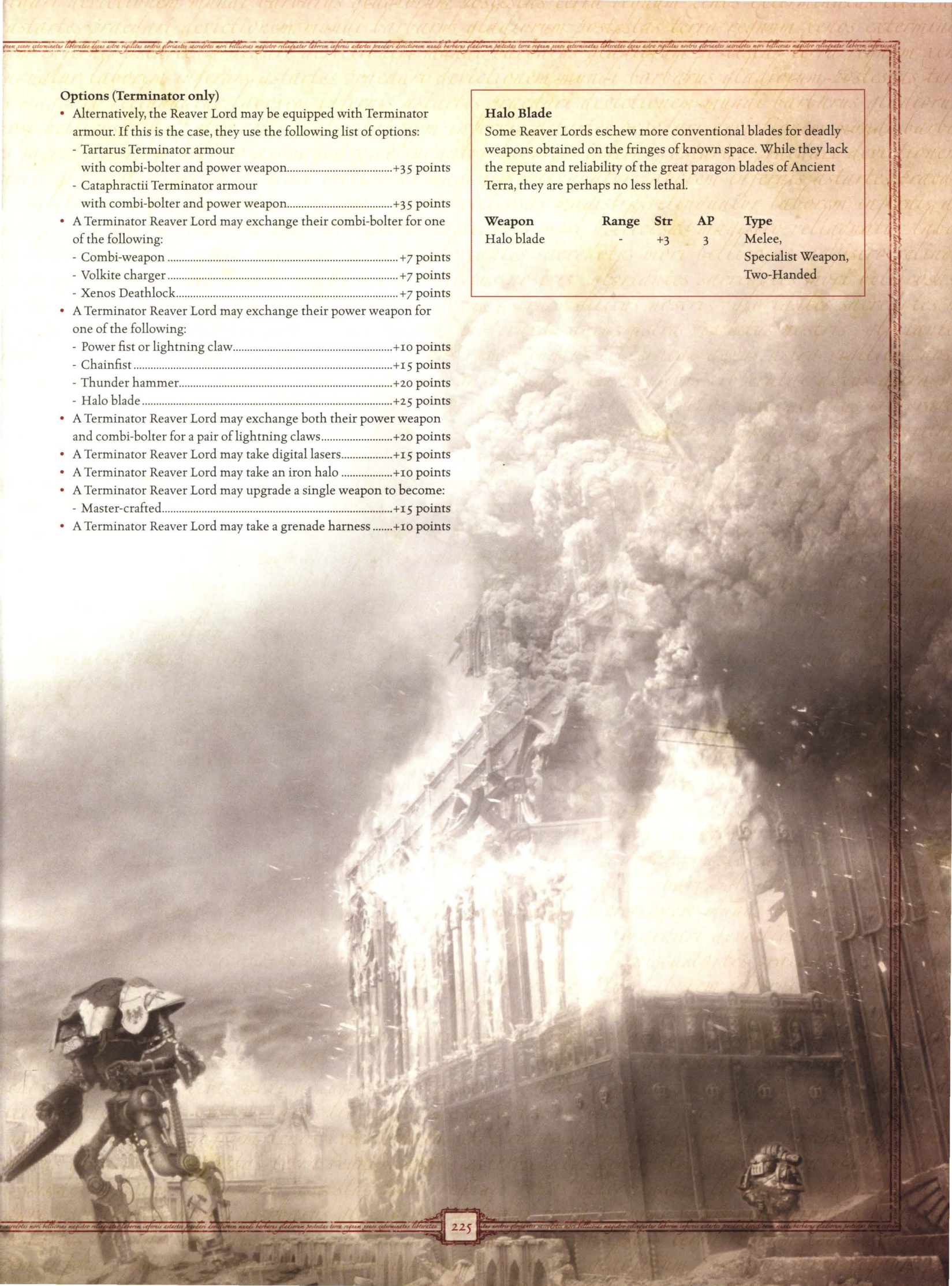
Options (Terminator only)

- Alternatively, the Reaver Lord may be equipped with Terminator armour. If this is the case, they use the following list of options:
  - Tartarus Terminator armour with combi-bolter and power weapon.....+35 points
  - Cataphractii Terminator armour with combi-bolter and power weapon.....+35 points
- A Terminator Reaver Lord may exchange their combi-bolter for one of the following:
  - Combi-weapon .....+7 points
  - Volkite charger .....+7 points
  - Xenos Deathlock.....+7 points
- A Terminator Reaver Lord may exchange their power weapon for one of the following:
  - Power fist or lightning claw.....+10 points
  - Chainfist .....+15 points
  - Thunder hammer.....+20 points
  - Halo blade .....+25 points
- A Terminator Reaver Lord may exchange both their power weapon and combi-bolter for a pair of lightning claws.....+20 points
- A Terminator Reaver Lord may take digital lasers.....+15 points
- A Terminator Reaver Lord may take an iron halo .....+10 points
- A Terminator Reaver Lord may upgrade a single weapon to become:
  - Master-crafted.....+15 points
- A Terminator Reaver Lord may take a grenade harness .....+10 points

Halo Blade

Some Reaver Lords eschew more conventional blades for deadly weapons obtained on the fringes of known space. While they lack the repute and reliability of the great paragon blades of Ancient Terra, they are perhaps no less lethal.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Halo blade	-	+3	3	Melee, Specialist Weapon, Two-Handed



The Nemean Reaver

First Lord of the Dark Brotherhood, The Scarred Master, The Gloaming Slayer

180 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
The Nemean Reaver	6	5	4	5	3	5	3	10	2+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Calibanite flammbard
- Kithairon war plate
- Master-crafted bolt pistol
- Iron halo
- Frag & krak grenades

Special Rules
- Independent Character
- Legiones Astartes (Blackshields – Outlanders)
- Scars of the Xenocide
- Jealous Command
- Warlord (If the Nemean is the army's Warlord, he has the First Lord of the Dark Brotherhood Trait rather than rolling randomly)

HQ

No certain record holds the true name of the Blackshield Reaver Lord who became known throughout the Pale Stars as the Nemean Reaver – or simply the Nemean. It is generally held that he was once an officer of the I[st] Legion —the Dark Angels— though even this is far from certain. An unconfirmed rumour which attached itself to this figure painted the Nemean as a survivor of the Rangdan Xenocides, the apocalyptic conflict that saw the nascent Imperium threatened with destruction, and he had already entered into the legends of the Legiones Astartes long before the Horus Heresy. Whether true or not, that rumour ascribed the Nemean Reaver the attributes of a veteran of this dark and terrible conflict, and speaks to the ruthless and inhuman reputation this Blackshield commander had achieved in the brief span of years that formed the Horus Heresy's middle phase, known post-commonly as the Age of Darkness.

Evidence suggests that after the Pale Stars conflict, the Nemean Reaver, or at least a figure claiming that name, would in the later years of the war come to serve Malcador the Sigillite, a duty that would culminate upon the walls of Terra at the very climax of the Horus Heresy.

Calibanite Flammbard
This double-handed power sword is an example of the work of a hidden order of Calibanite blade-smiths and a peerless example of its type, and did much in the eyes of outsiders to brand the Nemean as once a Dark Angel. The blade of this sword is formed into a distinctive wave-shape that a master such as the Nemean can use to parry his opponent's blows in such a way as to fatally disrupt their swordplay.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Calibanite flammbard	-	+1	2	Melee, Two-handed, Flame-edged

Flame-edged: Enemy models fighting against the Nemean in a Challenge suffer a penalty of -1 to their Weapon Skill.

Kithairon War Plate
The Nemean Reaver's armour is held by some to contain elements of a far older suit of power armour, possibly pre-dating the rise of the Imperium by many millennia.

The Kithairon war plate confers the Eternal Warrior and Adamantium Will special rules, and counts as Void Hardened (failed saves against Blast and Template weapons may be re-rolled and additional special rules are conferred when using the Zone Mortalis expansion).

Scars of the Xenocide
Hidden in the shadows beneath a ragged-edged hood, the Nemean's face is a twisted mass of scar tissue, the result of hideous and unnatural wounds some say were sustained at the height of the apocalyptic Rangdan Xenocides. Those who look upon that face cannot fail but be consumed by horror.

The Nemean Reaver causes Fear and is himself Fearless.

Jealous Command
If the Nemean Reaver is chosen as part of the army, he must be part of its Primary Detachment and he must be the army's Warlord.

Warlord: First Lord of the Dark Brotherhood
Though the facts surrounding the establishment of the Dark Brotherhood remain largely obscured, it is known that the Nemean was the group's first master, and it was to him that numerous Blackshields rallied as they sought to carve out their own domain deep with the Eridayn Cataract.

All friendly units with the Legiones Astartes (Blackshields) special rule within 12" of the Nemean add +1 to their score when determining who has won an assault.

Special Option: Chosen of the Sigillite
The Nemean fought as a Blackshield throughout the middle years of the Horus Heresy, leading the Dark Brotherhood against numerous foes as he sought to carve out a haven within the Eridayn Cataract. At the Conclave of Optera however, he renounced his position and departed with Nathaniel Garro for Terra, leaving his lieutenants to take command of the Dark Brotherhood and lead it as they saw fit.

If they wish, players may use the Nemean not as the leader of a Blackshields force, but as a Knight-Errant, representing him fulfilling his destiny within the ranks of Malcador's Chosen. If this option is taken, the Nemean loses the Blackshields – Outlanders element of the Legiones Astartes special rule, as well as Jealous Command and his Warlord Trait. In return, he gains the Oath of Moment, Implacable Advance, Preferred Enemy (Traitors) and By Falsehood Cloaked special rules, and is counted to all intents and purposes as a Knight-Errant. This option costs an additional +35 points.

Players taking this special option should indicate this to their opponent, and the best way to do so is by applying a grey rather than a black paint scheme to the model, though this is not strictly necessary.

Blackshield Marauder Squad

125 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Marauder	4	4	4	4	1	4	2	8	3+
Marauder Chief	5	4	4	4	1	4	3	9	3+

TROOPS

While most Blackshield forces are able to field a range of Legiones Astartes pattern unit types, the squad configuration for which they are most well known is the iconic Marauder squad. Such units are equipped according to the proclivities of their leaders or the tastes or expertise of the individual Blackshields, and no two are likely to be identically constituted. While many Marauder squads carry familiar Legiones Astartes weapons, others wield an idiosyncratic array of fire arms and melee weapons prised from the cold, dead hands of their foes, or plundered from the holds of captured freighters. Many Blackshields have carried out field modifications to their arms, armour and equipment that would never be sanctioned within the parent Legions from which they are drawn, sometimes to improve performance and at other times simply to keep them in service for one battle more.

Varying widely in demeanour even within a single squad, Blackshields range in character from taciturn warriors intent upon delivering justice upon those who have wronged them, to murderous pirates who care only to reave across the stars, carving out their own domains in defiance of Terra and Warmaster alike.

Unit Composition
- 4 Marauders
- 1 Marauder Chief

Unit Type
- Marauders: Infantry
- Marauder Chief: Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Bolt pistol
- Chainsword, chain axe or combat blade
- Power armour
- Frag & krak grenades

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes (Blackshields)

Dedicated Transport
- A Blackshield Marauder squad may choose a Legion Rhino, Anvillus pattern Dreadclaw or Proteus pattern Land Raider as a Dedicated Transport if it numbers 10 models or less.

Options
- The Marauder squad may take:
  - Up to 15 additional Marauders ..... +12 points each
- Each model in the squad may take one of the following options:
  - Lascarbine or autogun ..... Free
  - Astartes shotgun ..... +1 point each
  - Laslock ..... +2 points each
  - A second bolt pistol ..... +2 points each
  - Bolter or Pariah bolter ..... +2 points each
  - Heavy chainsword ..... +5 points each
  - Lascutter ..... +10 points each
- Rather than taking an option from the previous list, one in five Marauders may take one of the following options:
  - Sniper rifle ..... +5 points each
  - Xenos deathlock ..... +8 points each
  - Flamer or Pariah flamer ..... +10 points each
  - Rotor cannon ..... +10 points each
  - Grenade launcher (frag & krak) ..... +10 points each
  - Heavy flamer ..... +15 points each
  - Meltagun ..... +15 points each
  - Plasma gun ..... +15 points each
  - Heavy bolter ..... +15 points each
  - Autocannon ..... +15 points each
  - Missile launcher (with frag & krak missiles) ..... +20 points each
  - Multi-melta ..... +20 points each
  - Exchange their bolt pistol for a plasma pistol ..... +10 points each
  - Exchange their bolt pistol for a hand flamer ..... +10 points each
  - Exchange their chainsword/combat blade for a power weapon ..... +10 points each
- One Blackshield Marauder may take a:
  - Nuncio-vox ..... +10 points
- The Marauder Chief may exchange their chainsword/combat blade for one of the following:
  - Power fist ..... +15 points
  - Single lightning claw ..... 15 points
  - Thunder hammer ..... +20 points
- The Marauder Chief may take:
  - Combi-weapon ..... +10 points
  - Plasma pistol ..... +10 points
- Additionally, the Marauder Chief may take melta bombs ..... +5 points
- The entire squad may exchange its power armour for:
  - Pariah power armour ..... Free

Blackshield Assault Legionary

Unknown Appellation (Codified 'Theoricus 2/9')
The Third Covenant
Sable IV Retribution / Defence of Kurnow / Battle of the Festering Abyss / Kragha-Soth Offensive

The Third Covenant was a Blackshield group that operated across several sectors to the galactic north of the Great Core, into which they ultimately vanished towards the end of the Horus Heresy. Several studies have been made of the Third Covenant in an effort to identify its members, but most have proven unsuccessful as each Blackshield went to great lengths to conceal their origins. They even renounced their own given names and used instead terms derived from other, more esoteric sources.

The group is of particular interest to later generations of Imperial agents because, having rejected the teachings of their own gene-sires (Traitor and Loyalist alike), they turned to other, more shrouded doctrines. Ostensibly, the Third Covenant fought for the Warmaster's cause, but in truth it pursued its own goals often only tangentially co-aligned with those of Horus and his allies.

Blackshield Heraldry

The Blackshield depicted here is a member of an Assault squad. His armour is a typically heterogeneous mix of elements taken from defeated foes. In places the ubiquitous black heraldry has worn away to reveal the colours of the original owner, in particular the red of a Thousand Sons Legionary on the left shoulder guard and right shin, and the sea green of the Sons of Horus on the Mark IV helm. Of particular note is the mythological hippocampus worn upon the right shoulder as the icon of the Third Covenant. The many esoteric sigils betray the Covenant's true allegiances – to powers other than Terra or even the Warmaster.

Third Covenant Armourial

Obscured Heraldry, possibly Thousand Sons Source

Space Marine Legion Crusade Army List Additions

The following section details additional rules, units and special characters for playing games of Warhammer 40,000 set against the backdrop of the dark and terrible wars of the Horus Heresy, and is intended to be used in conjunction with the army list provided in the Legiones Astartes Crusade Army List book.

HQ

"By these colours and by this sigil are these beasts of steel inducted into our ranks. Though they be neither mortal men nor Legiones Astartes, they harbour within them the animus belicosa—the spirit of war that drives us all. They are honoured to bear our heraldry, and we are honoured that they fight at our side. Until such time as they fall in battle, they are one with the Legion, our brethren and our blood."

Extract from the Rite of Commission

New Consul Type: Legion Praevian — +35 points

A Legion Consul Praevian is the keeper of the Legion's bound automata, those soulless machines sworn to the Legion's service and inducted into their ranks as honourary Legionaries after decades of service, a practice that increased as the Horus Heresy inflicted an ever-greater death toll on many Legions' ranks. Initiated into the rites of the Mechanicum to a lesser degree, these officers oversee the maintenance and programming of their charges, and ensure that loyalty to the Legion and its traditions are enshrined in their core logic. On the field of battle they march at the forefront of the inducted maniples, guiding them in the correct prosecution of war and acting as examples of true sons of the Legion. Often chosen from amongst the ranks of those veterans whose injuries have required extensive augmetic rebuild and left them ill-suited for other, more specialised roles, these warriors are often solitary individuals, given to brooding and keeping to the company of their iron brothers. It is rare in most Legions for these warriors to advance higher up the chain of command, and some Legions use the rank as a dumping ground for those deemed unfit for other duties, while others, most notably the Iron Hands and Salamanders, consider it an honour to serve with such unique avatars of the Machine Cult's craft.

A Legion Centurion may be upgraded to a Legion Praevian in the same way as any other type of Consul, and has the following additional rules and provisions:

- **Special Rules:** Support Officer, Master of Cybernetica, Legion Inductees
- **Wargear:** The Legion Praevian has a cortex controller and cortex designator.
- **Restrictions:** May not take a Jetpack, Jetbike, Bike or Terminator armour.

Support Officer
A Legion Praevian may not fulfil a Compulsory HQ choice.

Cortex Designator
When a model with a cortex designator makes a successful shooting attack against an enemy unit (whether or not the attack inflicts an unsaved wound), any automata in the same unit gain the Preferred Enemy special rule when targeting that enemy unit until the end of the controlling player's current turn.

Master of Cybernetica
A single unit of either Castellax or Vorax class Battle-automata must be selected as part of the Legion Praevian unit (note that Battle-automata units selected in this fashion may not select the Paragon of Metal upgrade). This unit does not use up an additional Force Organisation choice and the Legion Praevian must be included as part of the unit even if it includes models of the Monstrous Creature type (while it is part of a unit of Monstrous Creatures, the Legion Praevian may not Go To Ground, voluntarily or otherwise). The Legion Praevian may not leave this unit.

Legion Inductees
The unit of Battle-automata to which the Legion Praevian is attached gains the Legiones Astartes special rule possessed by the Legion Praevian or one of the following special rules: Furious Charge, Tank Hunters or Scout (when the Scout special rule is selected, it also applies to the Legion Praevian). These special rules are selected at no additional points cost. In addition, when utilising units of Battle-automata with the Legiones Astartes special rule, the following exceptions and additions apply:

- **Sons of Horus:** When using the Merciless Fighters special rule, each Battle-automata counts as three models. For an additional +15 points per model, a Castellax Battle-automata with the Legiones Astartes (Sons of Horus) special rule may take Banestrike bolter rounds for any boltguns they have.
- **Emperor's Children:** For +15 points, all Battle-automata in the unit gain sonic shriekers.
- **Death Guard:** Battle-automata with the Legiones Astartes (Death Guard) special rule may upgrade flamers to use the Chem Munitions special rule.
- **Night Lords:** For the purposes of the Nostraman Blood special rule, each Battle-automata counts as three models. For an additional +10 points per model, a Battle-automata unit with the Legiones Astartes (Night Lords) special rule may take Trophies of Judgement.
- **Word Bearers:** If the army includes a Diabolist, a Battle-automata unit with the Legiones Astartes (Word Bearers) special rule may purchase the Dark Channelling upgrade.
- **Alpha Legion:** For an additional +15 points per model, a Castellax Battle-automata with the Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion) special rule may take Banestrike bolter rounds for any boltguns they have.
- **Raven Guard:** The By Wing & Talon special rule grants Battle-automata models the Infiltrate and Fleet special rules.
- **Dark Angels:** For an additional +15 points per model, Castellax Battle-automata with the Legiones Astartes (Dark Angels) special rule may re-roll failed To Wound rolls against Monstrous Creatures and Flying Monstrous Creatures.

New Consul Type: Legion Delegatus +15 points

A Legion Delegatus is a mid-ranking Legion officer, such as a Centurion, tasked with a specific mission by Legion high command and formally deputised to act in all matters with the full weight of their commander's authority. As such, they can mobilise the Legion's resources to the full, deploy its assets and, if performing a mission of vital strategic worth, assemble a strike force of chosen warriors.

A Legion Centurion may be upgraded to a Legion Delegatus in the same way as any other type of Consul, and has the following additional rules and provisions:

- **Special Rules:** Rite of Command
- **Wargear:** One of the Legion Delegatus' weapons may be Master-crafted for Free.
- **Restrictions:** A Legion Praetor or Lords of War choice may not be taken in a Primary Detachment with a Legion Delegatus as its Warlord.

Rite of Command
This Consul has the Master of the Legion special rule (see the Legion Praetor entry in the Legiones Astartes Crusade Army list) and may take a Legion Command Squad. In addition, the Consul must always be the army's Warlord, unless their Legion's Primarch is also taken. A Legion Delegatus may be taken in armies below the normal 1,000 points threshold for taking models with the Master of the Legion special rule.

New Rite Of War: Chosen Duty

The following Rite of War can be used by a Legion Delegatus being fielded as the army's Warlord. It represents the officer selecting a small but potent strike force of chosen warriors for the prosecution of a specific objective. It can be used in any mission, but is particularly appropriate for use in smaller scale games, such as the Zone Mortalis missions provided in *The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal* and *The Horus Heresy Book Three – Extermination*, and the Strategic Raids missions in *The Horus Heresy Book Four – Conquest*.

Effects
- Legion Veteran squads are Troops choices in this army, and must be taken as compulsory choices.
- If a Legion Delegatus who is a Warlord survives the mission, their side gains an additional Victory point where these are in use. If the Legion Delegatus Warlord is slain, the enemy gains an additional Victory point (over and above any they would earn from the Slay the Warlord Secondary Objective).

HQ

"My colours are those of my Legion, my sigil that of my sire. These orders I bear are those of my master and they are to be obeyed without question. Your blood is his blood, and he shall shed it as he will."

Centurion Jagrafar Hunn,
Legiones Astartes
White Scars

HQ

"It has been witnessed in the song of the solar fires, and its commutation is found in the fractal patterns of spilled blood and spent shell casing alike, writ as immutably as atomatic decay. The program known commonly as 'organic life' has almost reached its final solution, its ultimate course is all but run. So declares the Omnissiah plainly and unequivocally for those with the wisdom to understand."

Sahalida Khjartan
The Heretek Gnostarch
of Antioch Majoris
Proclamations,
Vol CVII/gamma-X

New Consul Type: Herald

+40 points

As the wars of the Horus Heresy spread to consume the galaxy, billions fought and died under the banners of warlords they had never seen or heard firsthand, and even among those such as the Legiones Astartes, near-religious fervour became common for those artefacts touched by Primarch, Warmaster or Regent, and given to a chosen emissary as a sign of authority and favour. The Blackshields, having obscured their heraldry or cast aside former masters were no different, their strange sigils or blackened flags becoming totems of destruction and the foresworn.

Any Centurion may be upgraded to a Herald in the same way as any other type of Consul. Which particular type will depend on the Faction allegiance of their army – Traitor or Loyalist, or in the case of Blackshields, their own unique variant, the Dark Herald.

- **Special Rules:** Rite of Command (see page 233), Support Officer, Banner Type, Fallen Honour
- **Wargear:** The Herald carries one of the following: Banner of the Aquila (Loyalist), Banner of the Eye (Traitor), Dark Banner (Blackshield).
- **Restrictions:** The Consul may not take a Jump Pack, Jetbike, Bike or Terminator armour, may not take any weapon with the Two-handed special rule and may not claim a bonus attack in assault for carrying an additional melee weapon or pistol.

Special Rules

Banner Type

Dark Banner: The Dark Herald and any unit with the Legiones Astartes (Blackshields) special rule within 12" have the Fear special rule and add +1 to their Leadership characteristic (to a maximum of 10).

Banner of the Aquila: The Loyalist Herald and any Loyalist unit with the Legiones Astartes special rule within 12" add +1 to their WS characteristic (to a maximum of 5).

Banner of the Eye: The Traitor Herald and any Traitor unit with the Legiones Astartes special rule within 12" add +1" to their Charge and Run distances, and may re-roll To Hit rolls of a '1' in assault on any turn in which they have successfully charged.

Fallen Honour

Should a Herald be slain, the honour and morale of their compatriots is compromised. If a Herald is slain, an additional Victory point is scored by the opposing player in missions where Victory points are in use.

Support Officer

A Herald may not fulfil a compulsory HQ choice.

Ancient-Claviger Khalon

Leviathan Pattern Siege Dreadnought

Heavy Assault Echelon, Order Novii, Morragul Clan-company

Scouring of Tredecimmia

Ancient-Claviger Khalon was once a Legion Consul of the Ungavarr Clan-company, a siege breaker of great renown, born of Terra and who won countless honours throughout the early Great Crusade. Khalon fell in battle in the apocalyptic Battle of Rust, his life saved by Legion apothecaries and his body preserved in stasis for future interment into the armoured form of a mighty Dreadnought. When at last such a vessel was assigned, it was a prototype class intended for heavy assault and siege operations, the very discipline Khalon had devoted himself to throughout his service to the Xth Legion.

Upon his internment into a Dreadnought suit however, Khalon was found to be temperamentally ill-suited to his new mode of existence and prone to bouts of extreme instability. At the order of his Primarch, he was transferred from Clan Ungavarr to Clan Morragul, his demeanour considered more suited to the orphans and outcasts gathered under the stewardship of the Iron-Father Autek Mor.

HEAVY SUPPORT

Developed in the highest secrecy not on Mars, but on Terra, the Leviathan is an alternative development of the highly successful Contemptor. It represents hybrid technologies, some of which it is believed date back to the Age of Strife, which rumours had it were created by the hand of the Emperor directly. The resources required to produce one were immense, equal perhaps even to an Imperial Knight.

Made available to the Legions only in limited quantities before the outbreak of the Horus Heresy, they were highly valued and recognised as savagely powerful siege and hunter-killer units. They placed an onerous and ultimately lethal strain upon their occupants, the Leviathan's incumbent burning brightly but briefly in their second life. Many in the Mechanicum were deeply uneasy over the design, seeing it as purpose-designed to match and indeed destroy the Mechanicum's own battle-automata in some future, unforeseen crisis or dispute.

During the Horus Heresy, Loyalists with access to Terra were able to obtain new Leviathan Dreadnoughts, although never many, while Traitors and isolated forces were reduced to marshalling their few Leviathans carefully or hunting down the relics of the dead from battlefields to be re-commissioned.

Leviathan Pattern Siege Dreadnought Talon 270 points per model

				Armour					
	WS	BS	S	Front	Side	Rear	I	A	HP
Leviathan Siege Dreadnought	5	5	8	13	13	12	4	4	4

Unit Composition
- 1-3 Leviathan Pattern Siege Dreadnoughts

Unit Type
- Vehicle (Walker)

Wargear
- Two Leviathan siege claws, each with an inbuilt meltagun*
- Two torso-mounted heavy flamers
- Smoke launcher
- Searchlight
- Frag grenades
- Extra armour

**Note that the bonus close combat attack is already included in the Leviathan Dreadnought's profile.*

Special Rules
- Reinforced Atomantic Shielding
- Crushing Charge
- Dreadnought Talon
- Move Through Cover

Dedicated Transport
- A Leviathan Dreadnought Talon numbering a single Dreadnought may select a Legion Dreadnought Drop Pod or a Kharybids Assault Claw as a Dedicated Transport. Note that owing to its size, it may not be transported in other types of Drop Pod.

Options
- Any Dreadnought may exchange either of their heavy flamers for a:
  - Twin-linked volkite caliver ..... +5 points each
- Any Dreadnought may exchange either of their Leviathan siege claws with an inbuilt meltagun for a:
  - Leviathan siege drill with an inbuilt meltagun ..... +5 points each
- Any Dreadnought may be equipped with:
  - Armoured ceramite ..... +20 points each
  - Phosphex discharger ..... +15 points each
- Any Dreadnought may exchange either of their siege claws with inbuilt meltagun for one of the following weapons. Note that for each siege claw so replaced, the Dreadnought loses one attack:
  - Leviathan storm cannon ..... +10 points each
  - Cyclonic melta lance ..... +20 points each
  - Grav-flux bombard ..... +20 points each

Leviathan Weapons Systems
The Leviathan pattern Siege Dreadnought was a platform for a number of arcane and deadly short-ranged weapon systems which only its powerful reactor system could readily supply. These ranged from rapid fire multi-barrelled cannon designed to scythe down infantry, to rapid cycling melta beam weapons for fortress-breaching, to gravitation torsion weapons which created a spiralling vortex of force whose power was amplified by the target's own mass, capable of twisting the most resilient armour into tortured scrap.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Leviathan siege claw	-	X2	2	Melee, Wrecker‡, Severing Cut
Leviathan siege drill	-	X2	2	Melee, Wrecker‡, Armourbane
Cyclonic melta lance	18"	9	1	Heavy 3, Melta
Leviathan storm cannon	24"	7	3	Heavy 6, Sunder
Grav-flux bombard	18"	†	2	Heavy 1, Pinning, Large Blast (5"), Graviton Collapse†, Torsion Crusher, No Cover Saves
Phosphex discharger	6"-18"	5	2	Heavy 3, Barrage, One Use, Blast (3"), Poison (3+), Crawling Fire‡, Lingering Death‡

‡ *See the Legiones Astartes Crusade Army List book.*

Severing Cut: Each time a non-vehicle model suffers an unsaved wound from this weapon, roll a D6. On a 4+, the model suffers an additional D3 wounds which must be saved separately using the weapon's profile (note that these wounds do not themselves generate more additional wounds).

Torsion Crusher: When a target with an Armour value is struck by this weapon, the amount of Hull Point damage caused by the weapon is doubled.

Reinforced Atomantic Shielding
The Leviathan pattern's design saw the most resilient field-augmented protection of any Dreadnought created during the Great Crusade, as well as the most dangerously powerful on-board reactor cells to meet its needs.

A Leviathan Dreadnought has a 4+ invulnerable save. In addition, if the Leviathan suffers a Vehicle Explodes damage result, add +D3 Str and +D3" to the radius of the blast.

Crushing Charge
When charging, the model inflicts 2 Hammer of Wrath attacks and gains +1 Initiative in the Assault phase of any turn in which it has charged.

Graviton Collapse
Instead of rolling To Wound normally with this weapon, any model caught in its blast must instead roll equal to or under their Strength on 2D6 or suffer a wound. Against targets with an Armour value, roll 3D6 for armour penetration instead. After the graviton pulse weapon has been fired, leave the Blast marker in place. This area now counts as both difficult terrain and dangerous terrain for the next turn thanks to the gravity flux.

First created during the Ullanor Campaign to replace battlefield losses in Dreadnoughts which far outstripped supply, the Contemptor-Cortus was a variant of the highly successful 'Prime' Contemptor pattern. Utilising many base components, the most sophisticated systems were replaced with robust —if less potent— systems which could be more readily fabricated in the field by the Legions. The result was a war machine with its own unique strengths and combat characteristics, but also with a not-undeserved reputation for instability.

The Mechanicum disapproved strongly of this ersatz design, and once the Ullanor Campaign was concluded, it was largely phased out and surviving examples decommissioned or put to permanent slumber as production of new Contemptor Primes and Castraferrum Dreadnoughts met the shortfall. What was destined to have been no more than a footnote in the annals of the Legiones Astartes was however to see a resurrection in the grinding wars of the Horus Heresy in response to a need far greater than even that which had brought the design into being. Ever more Contemptor-Cortus Dreadnoughts strode into battle, either as new units, or even to cannibalise Prime and Mortis pattern Contemptors salvaged as wreckage from the battlefields of the ongoing war.

Contemptor-Cortus Class Dreadnought Talon 135 points per model

				Armour					
	WS	BS	S	Front	Side	Rear	I	A	HP
Contemptor-Cortus Dreadnought	4	4	6	13	11	10	4	3	3

Unit Composition
- 1-3 Contemptor-Cortus Dreadnoughts

Unit Type
- Vehicle (Walker)

Wargear
- Twin-linked heavy bolter
- Dreadnought close combat weapon with inbuilt twin-linked bolter
- Smoke launchers
- Searchlight

Special Rules
- Dreadnought Talon
- Atomantic Deflector
- Atomantic Overcharge
- Unstable Internment
- Fleet
- Move Through Cover

Dedicated Transport
- A Contemptor-Cortus Dreadnought Talon numbering a single Dreadnought may select a Legion Dreadnought Drop Pod as a Dedicated Transport.

Options
- Any Contemptor-Cortus pattern Dreadnought in the Talon may replace their twin-linked heavy bolter or its Dreadnought close combat weapon and bolter with one of the following:
  - Multi-melta ..... Free
  - Twin-linked autocannon ..... +5 points each
  - Plasma cannon ..... +10 points each
  - Twin-linked volkite culverin ..... +15 points each
  - Kheres pattern assault cannon ..... +15 points each
  - Twin-linked lascannon ..... +25 points each
  - Heavy conversion beamer (One only) ..... +35 points each
  - (Replace heavy bolter only) Dreadnought close combat weapon with inbuilt twin-linked bolter* ..... Free
  - Chainfist with inbuilt twin-linked bolter ..... +10 points each

  **This grants the Dreadnought an additional close combat attack while equipped.*
- Any Contemptor-Cortus pattern Dreadnought in the Talon may replace any twin-linked bolter with one of the following:
  - Heavy flamer ..... +10 points each
  - Plasma blaster ..... +20 points each
  - Graviton gun ..... +15 points each
  - Meltagun ..... +15 points each
- Any Contemptor-Cortus pattern Dreadnought may be equipped with Extra Armour ..... +10 points each
- Any Contemptor-Cortus pattern Dreadnought may have a carapace-mounted Havoc launcher ..... +15 points each

Dreadnought Talon
A Dreadnought Talon is a specific formation designed to operate as a 'clenched fist' on the battlefield in order to smash through the fiercest resistance, but given the power and individuality of the Dreadnoughts themselves operates more akin to a warrior band than a squadron unit.

When first deployed on the battlefield (either at the start of the game or when arriving via Reserves later on), the Dreadnoughts must be placed within 6" of each other, but afterwards operate independently and are not treated as a vehicle squadron.

Atomantic Deflector
The Contemptor-Cortus utilises a less sophisticated version of the atomantic reactor/shield projector array that powered the Contemptor Dreadnoughts produced before the outbreak of Mankind's civil war. While the system is not capable of the sustained and omnidirectional output of the Prime pattern Contemptors, it can nonetheless provide an invaluable defence against incoming fire.

The Contemptor-Cortus has a 5+ invulnerable save against shooting attacks and explosions which originate in its front arc. In addition, if it suffers a Vehicle Explodes damage result, add +1" to the radius of the blast.

Atomantic Overcharge
The creation of the Contemptor-Cortus class Dreadnought is regarded by many adepts of the Machine God as contrary to the codes and commandments of Omnissian dogma. Such critics point to the fact that core failsafe protocols and technocantic wards inherent to the Contemptor Prime template are almost entirely absent, making it possible for its reactor to be pushed to dangerous levels in the heat of battle by the will of the entombed pilot, or merely and more dangerously by their anger alone.

At the beginning of the controlling player's turn, they may declare that the Contemptor-Cortus is overcharging its atomantic reactor. The player may apply one of the following bonuses until the end of that player turn:

- The Rage special rule
- +1" Move and Charge distances
- +2" Run distance
- +1 Initiative

At the end of its player turn, roll a D6 for any Contemptor-Cortus using this option. On a roll of 1, it loses a Hull Point. If the loss of this Hull Point is sufficient to wreck the Dreadnought, it suffers an immediate Vehicle Explodes damage result, except that the radius of the explosion is increased by +D3" instead of the usual +1".

Unstable Internment
As products of the dark times of the Horus Heresy, the systemic connections of the Dreadnought's occupant to the machine itself were products of haste and desperation as often as need, and depending on the Legion which fielded them could also be carried out with barbaric indifference to the sanity or biological stability of the one entombed within.

A Contemptor-Cortus must always make Sweeping Advances if it is able to do so, and it can never be a scoring unit.

Legiones Astartes Quad Launcher Support Battery — 60 points each

ELITES

The rapier carrier is an automated weapons platform made mobile by an integral track drive system which had been used extensively through the Great Crusade by various branches of the Imperium's military. Its principal advantage is its relatively small size compared to other mobile support weapons systems, and readiness of deployment in confined spaces and treacherous terrain. For much of the Great Crusade, for the Legiones Astartes this was of most use as a close-ranged heavy anti-tank weapon, with the laser destroyer the most preferred armament, while it was the Solar Auxilia that first developed a rapid firing mortar system for the rapier and used it almost exclusively.

However, as Mankind's galactic civil war ground on, Space Marine forces grew ever more fractured and diffuse, and the need for more portable, and if needed disposable, light artillery became paramount for smaller Legion strike forces, isolated survivor bands and marauders. All of these began to rely greatly on the compact firepower of the rapier quad launcher as a force multiplier in battle and so the quad launcher's adaptability was used to deploy a wide number of specialist munitions to further extend the rapier's strategic use.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Legion Space Marine	4	4	4	4	1	4	1	8	3+
Rapier Carrier	-	-	-	7	2	-	-	-	3+

Unit Composition:
- 1-3 Rapiers forming a Battery. Each Rapier has 2 Space Marine Crew.

Unit Type:
- Rapier Carrier: Artillery
- Legion Space Marines: Infantry

Wargear (Space Marine Crew):
- Bolt pistol
- Power armour
- Frag & krak grenades

Wargear (Rapier Carrier):
- Quad launcher with frag shells

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes (Space Marine Crew)
- Extremely Bulky (Rapier combined with Crew)

Options:
- The entire Battery may be equipped with the following additional ammunition types at the costs shown. All Rapiers in the Battery must be identically upgraded:
  - Incendiary shell ..... +5 points each
  - Shatter shell ..... +10 points each
  - Splinter shell ..... +10 points each
- If the detachment of which the Rapier is part of contains a Siege Master Consul, then the entire Battery may be equipped with phosphex canister shot. All Rapiers in the Battery must be identically upgraded:
  - Phosphex canister shot ..... +20 points each

Rapier Quad Launcher

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Frag shell	12"-60"	5	5	Heavy 4, Barrage, Blast (3"), Shell Shock
Shatter shell	36"	8	4	Heavy 4, Sunder
Incendiary shell	12"-60"	4	5	Heavy 4, Barrage, Blast (3"), Ignores Cover Saves
Splinter shell	12"-36"	2	4	Heavy 4, Barrage, Blast (3"), Rending
Phosphex canister shot	12"-36"	4	3	Heavy 4, Barrage, Blast (3"), Poisoned (3+), Crawling Fire‡, Lingering Death‡

‡ *See the Legiones Astartes Crusade Army List book.*

Legion Vindicator Siege Tank Squadron

120 points per model

	BS	Armour Front	Side	Rear	HP
Legion Vindicator Tank	4	13	11	10	3

Unit Composition
- 1-3 Vindicator Siege Tanks

Unit Type
- Vehicle (Tank)

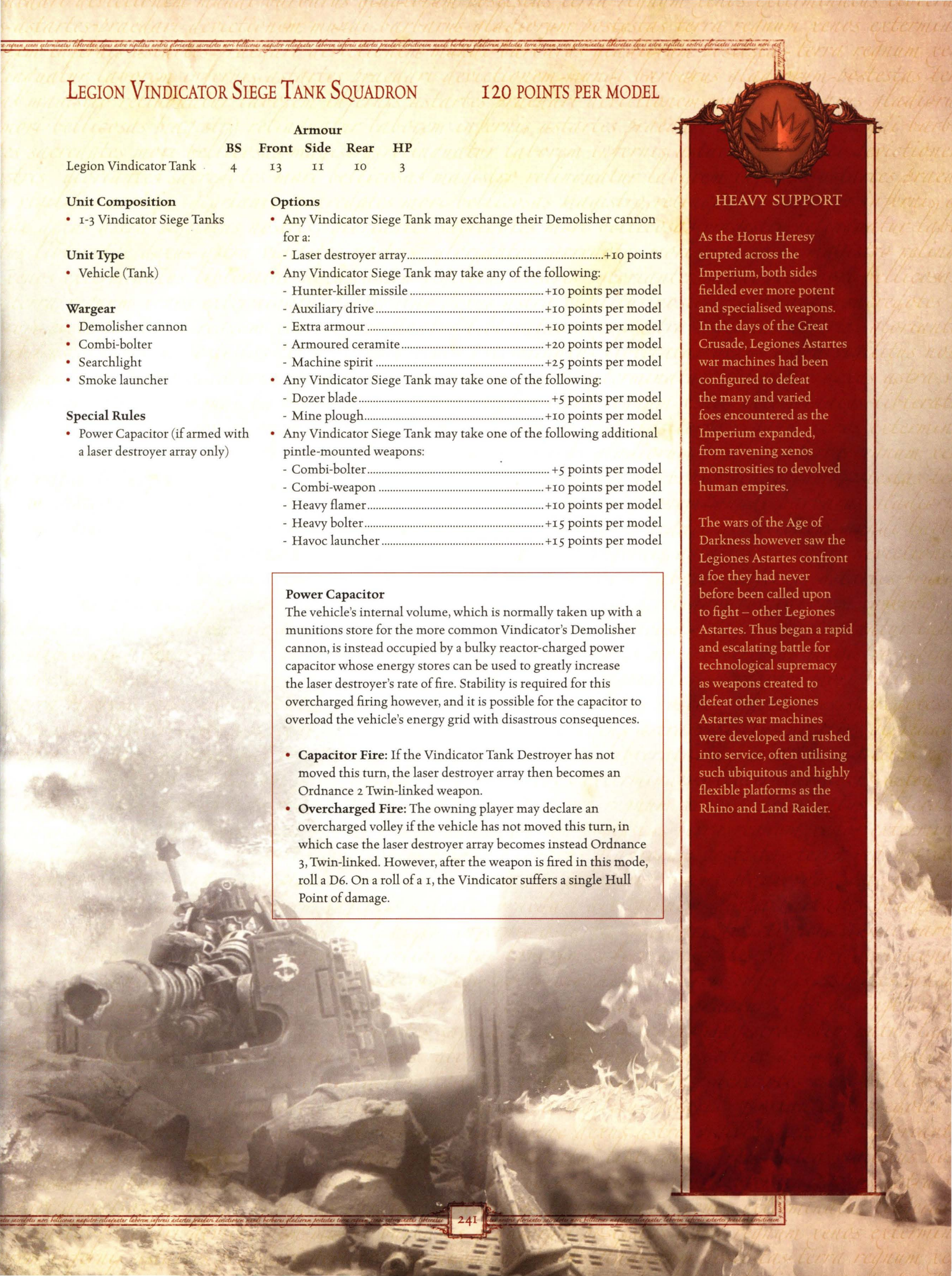
Wargear
- Demolisher cannon
- Combi-bolter
- Searchlight
- Smoke launcher

Special Rules
- Power Capacitor (if armed with a laser destroyer array only)

Options
- Any Vindicator Siege Tank may exchange their Demolisher cannon for a:
  - Laser destroyer array ..... +10 points
- Any Vindicator Siege Tank may take any of the following:
  - Hunter-killer missile ..... +10 points per model
  - Auxiliary drive ..... +10 points per model
  - Extra armour ..... +10 points per model
  - Armoured ceramite ..... +20 points per model
  - Machine spirit ..... +25 points per model
- Any Vindicator Siege Tank may take one of the following:
  - Dozer blade ..... +5 points per model
  - Mine plough ..... +10 points per model
- Any Vindicator Siege Tank may take one of the following additional pintle-mounted weapons:
  - Combi-bolter ..... +5 points per model
  - Combi-weapon ..... +10 points per model
  - Heavy flamer ..... +10 points per model
  - Heavy bolter ..... +15 points per model
  - Havoc launcher ..... +15 points per model

Power Capacitor
The vehicle's internal volume, which is normally taken up with a munitions store for the more common Vindicator's Demolisher cannon, is instead occupied by a bulky reactor-charged power capacitor whose energy stores can be used to greatly increase the laser destroyer's rate of fire. Stability is required for this overcharged firing however, and it is possible for the capacitor to overload the vehicle's energy grid with disastrous consequences.

- **Capacitor Fire:** If the Vindicator Tank Destroyer has not moved this turn, the laser destroyer array then becomes an Ordnance 2 Twin-linked weapon.
- **Overcharged Fire:** The owning player may declare an overcharged volley if the vehicle has not moved this turn, in which case the laser destroyer array becomes instead Ordnance 3, Twin-linked. However, after the weapon is fired in this mode, roll a D6. On a roll of a 1, the Vindicator suffers a single Hull Point of damage.



Heavy Support

As the Horus Heresy erupted across the Imperium, both sides fielded ever more potent and specialised weapons. In the days of the Great Crusade, Legiones Astartes war machines had been configured to defeat the many and varied foes encountered as the Imperium expanded, from ravening xenos monstrosities to devolved human empires.

The wars of the Age of Darkness however saw the Legiones Astartes confront a foe they had never before been called upon to fight – other Legiones Astartes. Thus began a rapid and escalating battle for technological supremacy as weapons created to defeat other Legiones Astartes war machines were developed and rushed into service, often utilising such ubiquitous and highly flexible platforms as the Rhino and Land Raider.

Legion Mastodon Heavy Assault Transport

700 points

LORDS OF WAR

The Mastodon is one of the heaviest assault transports in the arsenal of the Legiones Astartes and one reserved for use against the most heavily fortified positions. Several times the size of a Land Raider, its transport bay can convey up to forty Space Marines through the most perilous of battlefields and protect them even from enemy Titans. The Mastodon's primary role is to deliver these troops directly into the breach created with the siege melta array mounted on its the armoured prow. Few fortifications can withstand this fearsome weapon and it is highly unusual for any foe manning such positions to withstand its blinding fires, the Legionaries passing through the melted stone, steel and flesh to press directly into the heart of the enemy position.

Although every Legion possessed Mastodons, they were used only sparingly during the later Great Crusade. Deploying them was a major operation in itself and so they tended only to be utilised in protracted siege operations where one or more entire Legions had amassed overwhelming force to destroy a foe no other was capable of engaging.

As the wars of the Horus Heresy ground onwards however, these heavy assault transports were used in increasing numbers as both sides committed every last effort to destroy utterly their hated foe.

		Armour			
	BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
Mastodon	4	14	14	14	10

Unit Composition
- 1 Mastodon

Unit Type
- Vehicle (Super-heavy)

Wargear
- One fixed forward siege melta array
- Two sponson-mounted heavy flamers
- Two sponson-mounted lascannon
- One turret-mounted Skyreaper battery
- Smoke launchers
- Searchlight
- Armoured ceramite

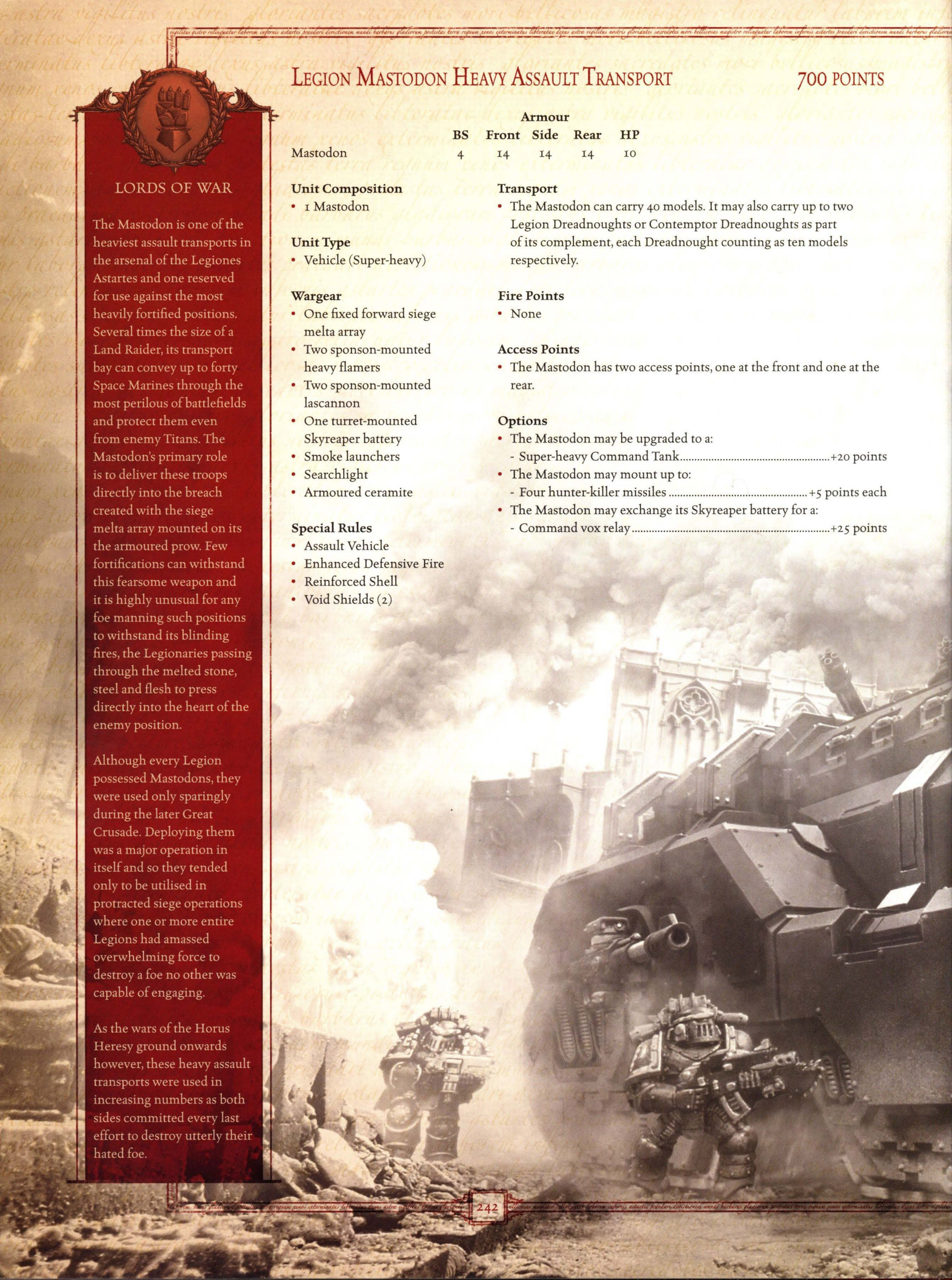
Special Rules
- Assault Vehicle
- Enhanced Defensive Fire
- Reinforced Shell
- Void Shields (2)

Transport
- The Mastodon can carry 40 models. It may also carry up to two Legion Dreadnoughts or Contemptor Dreadnoughts as part of its complement, each Dreadnought counting as ten models respectively.

Fire Points
- None

Access Points
- The Mastodon has two access points, one at the front and one at the rear.

Options
- The Mastodon may be upgraded to a:
  - Super-heavy Command Tank ..... +20 points
- The Mastodon may mount up to:
  - Four hunter-killer missiles ..... +5 points each
- The Mastodon may exchange its Skyreaper battery for a:
  - Command vox relay ..... +25 points



Special Rules

Enhanced Defensive Fire

So long as at least one unit occupies the Mastodon, the Mastodon may use Overwatch fire with its sponson-mounted weapons when assaulted. When this is the case, each sponson may be fired once per Assault phase at an assaulting unit within the particular weapon's arc of fire. In the case of the Mastodon's lascannon, this Overwatch fire is carried out at BS 2, and in the case of the Mastodon's heavy flamers, D3+1 automatic hits are inflicted per heavy flamer on the assault unit fired upon.

Reinforced Shell

The Mastodon is designed to withstand withering punishment and endure, and is fitted with a reinforced inner armour shell as well as considerable special defensive measures around its reactor core and munitions stores. As a result, if it is Destroyed, reduce the roll made on the Catastrophic Damage table by -2. If the result rolled is actually '0' or '-1' after this modifier is taken into account, the Mastodon does not Explode, but it instead becomes a broken shell (note that it still counts as being destroyed for the purpose of Victory points or any relevant mission objectives however). Any models transported inside suffer an immediate Strength 4 hit (Vehicles are struck on their weakest Armour value). From this point onwards, its shell is treated as a ruined building rather than a vehicle wreck, with its two doorways counted as being open access points to the interior.

Command Vox Relay

This allows the Mastodon's controlling player to add +1 to or subtract -1 from the results of any Reserves rolls they make while the Mastodon is in play. In addition, should enemy models suffer a Deep Strike Mishap when the Mastodon is in play, the roll suffers a -1 modifier.

Void Shields (2)

While the model's void shields are active, any hits scored by shooting attacks against it strike its void shields instead. The Mastodon has two void shields, each with an Armour value of 12. A Glancing hit or Penetrating hit or any hit by a Destroyer weapon scored against a shield causes it to collapse. After this, further hits strike the original target instead. At the end of each of its controlling player's turns, roll a D6 for each collapsed shield – a roll of 5+ instantly restores it.

Mastodon Weapons

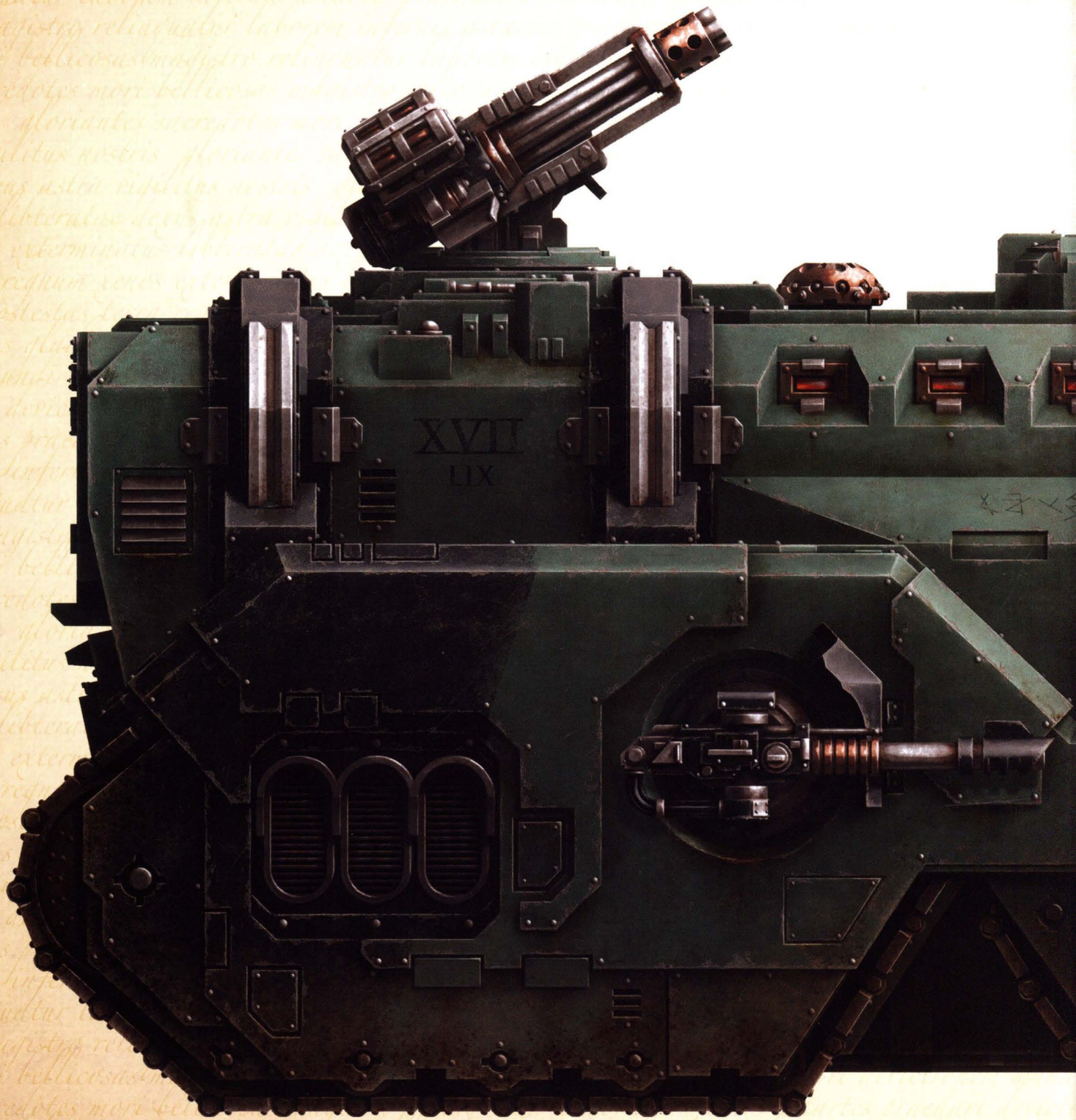
Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Siege melta array	12"	9	1	Heavy 4, Blast (3"), Melta, Stone Burner
Skyreaper battery	48"	7	4	Heavy 5, Skyfire, Twin-linked, Interceptor

Stone Burner: When striking against buildings and fortifications, each Penetrating hit inflicted becomes D3 Penetrating hits.

Mastodon Heavy Assault Transport 'Ios Est'

This Mastodon Heavy Assault Transport was part of the force purporting to be of the Sons of Horus Legion during the events that have become known as the Xana Incursion. While clearly bearing the colours of the Traitor Sons of Horus Legion, this vehicle in fact belonged to Loyalist forces believed to be operating under the command of Endryd Haar. Its origin remains unclear, but anecdotal evidence suggests that it had once served in the assault companies of the XIIth Legion – the World Eaters, perhaps as part of Haar's own command. At the time that the Primarch of the World Eaters turned upon his own sons at Isstvan III, Haar and his forces were thought lost in the outer darkness, an assumption proved false when he and the remnants of his force returned to find the Imperium consumed in the fires of civil war.

As depicted here, the Mastodon —thought to be the vehicle codified '*Ios Est*'— has been disguised as a Sons of Horus vehicle as per the *ruse de guerre* employed by Haar at Xana II. The stratagem is known to have deceived the largely isolated Mechanicum magi of



Xana, though it is doubtful it would have been as successful against the Legion whose colours the *Ios Est* bore, for it omits many of the more esoteric elements of decoration and iconography used by the Sons of Horus during this period.

The ultimate fate of the *Ios Est* remains unconfirmed, as do so many details of Endryd Haar's operation at Xana, but it is very likely that the vehicle was destroyed on the surface of Xana V during the battle which followed the deception's unmasking. Several unsourced reports have at least one Mastodon pattern war machine, its livery scoured to bare metal, in service with the irregular forces under Haar's command later in the war, including the battles for Beta-Garmon and finally at the Siege of Terra itself. While it is considered unlikely that the vehicle could have been present at all of these locations, the Age of Darkness has thrown up numerous many such mysteries and no such claim can or should be entirely discounted.

Endryd Haar

The Riven Hound, Praetor of the Black Shield, The Fangs of the Emperor

185 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Endryd Haar	6	4	4	5	3	4	4	10	2+

HQ

Once of the World Eaters Legion, Endryd Haar and his command were believed long lost on-Crusade when his brethren cast in their lot with the Traitors. Endryd was driven to cold madness by the revelation of his Legion's betrayal when he returned to find the Imperium riven by civil war, and he cast off all traces of his Legion's insignia and honours and swore a death oath to atone for the XIIth Legion's crimes. Endryd Haar fought alongside the Loyalists as a field commander in the dark days before the Siege of Terra, accepting any mission —whatever the odds of survival— so long as in doing so he could spill the blood of the enemy.

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Archaeotech pistol
- Master-crafted power fist
- Artificer armour
- Iron halo
- Frag & krak grenades

Special Rules
- Independent Character
- Legiones Astartes (World Eaters Renegade)
- Master of the Legion
- Bitter Blood
- Marked by Dark Fates
- Agent of the Emperor
- Warlord (If Endryd Haar is your army's Warlord, he has the Fangs of the Emperor Trait rather than rolling randomly)

Warlord: The Fangs of the Emperor:
While Endryd Haar is in play, pick up to three power armour-equipped infantry units with the Legiones Astartes special rule and which do not have Dedicated Transports. These units gain the Scout special rule and cannot be Pinned (and cannot Go To Ground) during the game.

Using Endryd Haar in your Horus Heresy Games
In Age of Darkness games, Endryd Haar can be taken as a HQ choice in any Legiones Astartes army with the Loyalist faction, but may only be taken as the army's Warlord if the Primary Detachment is chosen with either a World Eaters or Blackshields Legiones Astartes type.

Special Rules

Legiones Astartes (World Eaters Renegade)
Endryd Haar and his three battle-brothers were part of the first initiate company of the XIIth Legion created in the Imperial Geneworks on Terra, long before his brethren had taken the name of the War Hounds, and many decades before they would become Angron's 'eaters of worlds'. Now, only he survives of that company; a remnant of a lost age, a living weapon akin to his Legion brothers that came after and yet subtly different in his controlled savagery.

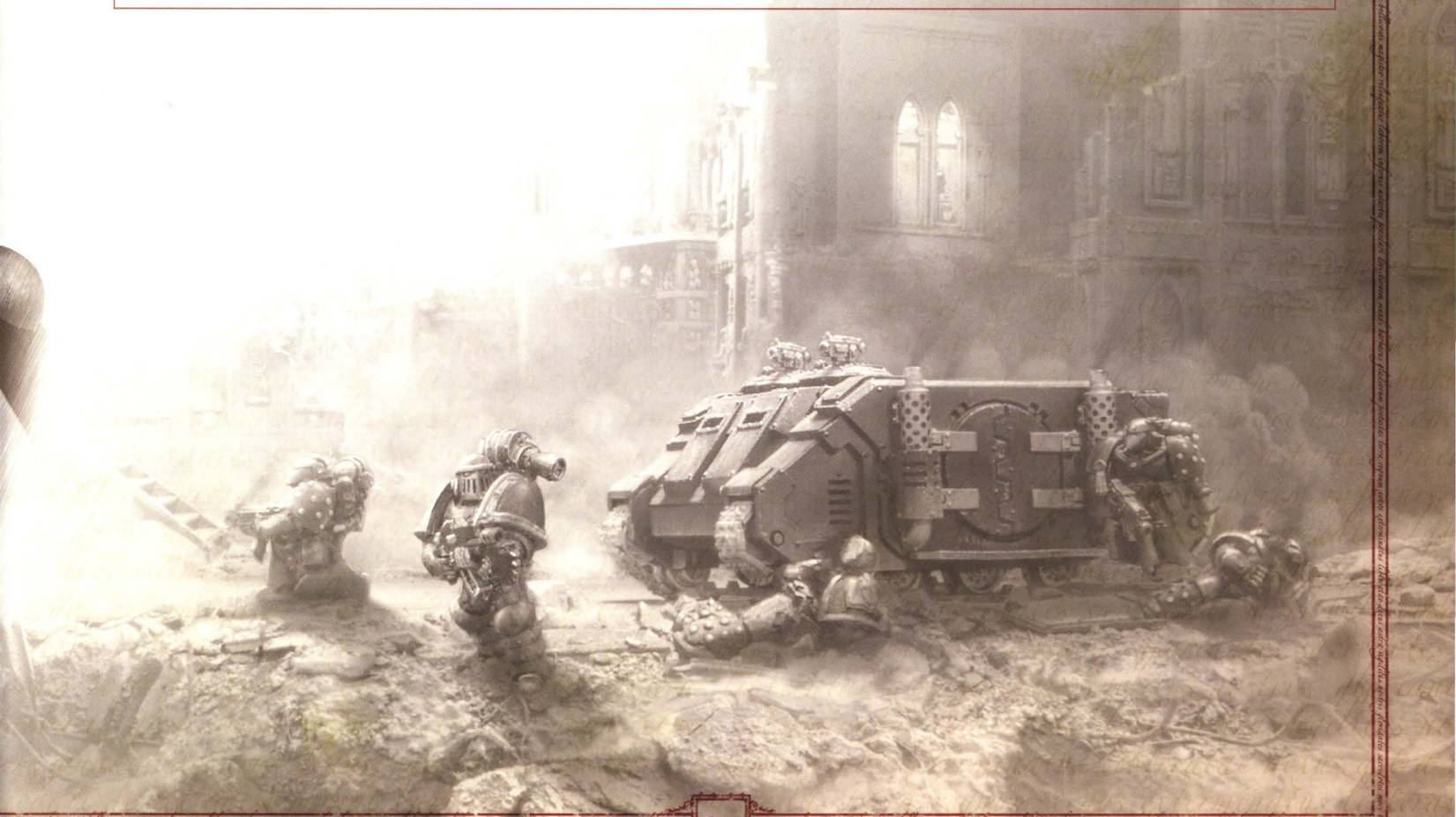
Endryd Haar possesses his own variant of his Legion's special rules.

- **Legiones Astartes:** Units with this special rule may always attempt to Regroup regardless of casualties.
- **Incarnate Violence:** Endryd gains the Furious Charge special rule once he or a unit that contains his model has destroyed another unit in close combat or caused one to Fall Back after a victorious Assault phase. Endryd Haar gains +1 WS when fighting in a Challenge, and if he kills a Character model in a Challenge adds an additional +1 to his side's Combat Resolution score for that Assault phase.
- **Savage Discipline:** Any unit with the Legiones Astartes (World Eaters) special rule ignores the Bloodlust special rule if it has been joined by Endryd Haar.
- For all other purposes (Rites of War, etc), Endryd Haar counts as having the Legiones Astartes (World Eaters) special rule as standard.

Bitter Blood
Endryd Haar and any unit he has joined may re-roll failed To Wound rolls in the first round of an assault with any unit from the Traitor faction.

Marked by Dark Fates
Endryd Haar has survived dire wounds and returned time and again from shadowed fates that have spelled the doom of all those around him as if he has been preserved by some unseen hand. In campaign games where character casualties and injuries between battles are a factor, any such chart results for Endryd Haar may be re-rolled.

Agent of the Emperor
Endryd Haar may also be included as a HQ choice in Space Marine Legion armies whose Legiones Astartes type he does not share, in an exception to the usual rules. Where this is the case, he does not gain any benefits or penalties from the different Legiones Astartes special rules possessed by the army or unit he is part of, nor does he negate those effects in other models. When his Leadership value is used to make tests for the unit, Endryd Haar's special rules rather than any special rules for the unit are used. So, for example, if Endryd Haar has joined a unit of Imperial Fists, he does not benefit from the unit's Disciplined Fire special rule which they continue to use normally, but nor is he bound by their Blood and Honour special rule. In the case of a Legion Command Squad chosen as a retinue for him, these must use the Legiones Astartes special rule of the detachment he is a part of, rather than Haar's own.



Autilon Skorr

Consul-Delegatus of the Alpha Legion

125 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Autilon Skorr	5	5	4	4	2	5	3	10	2+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Bolt pistol
- Master-crafted power axe
- Artificer armour
- Refractor field
- Frag & krak grenades

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion)
- Rite of Command (see page 233)
- Independent Character
- Desperate for Glory
- Warlord

This unit may only be taken as part of a Traitor faction army.

Desperate for Glory
When the controlling player of an army that includes Autilon Skorr as its Warlord rolls a dice for the Variable Game Length rule or any other special rule that determines if another Game Turn is played, they may choose to automatically play an additional turn instead of rolling. For the duration of this additional Game Turn, Autilon Skorr gains the Feel No Pain (3+) and Fearless special rules. When using the Variable Game Length special rule, this effect may be used on both dice rolls for additional turns.

Warlord: If Consul-Delegatus Skorr is the army's Warlord and you have chosen to take a Strategic Trait from the Choosing Your Army chapter of the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook, you may choose a Trait rather than rolling randomly. Other types of Warlord Trait are rolled for as normal.

HQ

Autilon Skorr was listed in the roll of honour of the Great Crusade's Council of War no less than seven times before the outbreak of the Horus Heresy, for he was frequently dispatched by the Alpha Legion to demand Compliance of newly discovered worlds in the name of the Imperium. Those worlds that refused invariably fell to disorder within weeks, a strike force of Alpha Legion squads led by Skorr himself delivering the *coups-de-grace* and bringing Compliance with only a single shot fired, invariably through the temple of the world's broken ruler. After the outbreak of the Horus Heresy he performed the same role, until the debacle at Epsilon Stranivar IX, where the disparate forces of a dozen shattered Loyalist battle groups threw back his forces in ignominious defeat.

In the wake of this defeat, Skorr's once spotless record was marred and he quickly fell from the graces of both the Warmaster and his Primarch, exiled to the distant battlefields of the northern rim of the galaxy and forgotten. There, desperate for a return to glory, he seized upon the Mezoa campaign as a chance for his return to the upper echelons of the Traitors' cause. Determined to sacrifice every last warrior under his command to feed his ambition, Autilon Skorr once more trod the path to war.

Gahlan Surlak

Dominus Nutritor, World Eaters Master of Inductii

110 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Gahlan Surlak	5	5	4	4	2	5	3	9	3+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Narthecium Primus
- Master-crafted needle pistol
- Power axe
- Refractor field
- Frag & krak grenades

Special Rules
- Independent Character
- Legiones Astartes (World Eaters)
- Master of Inductii
- Exhortation of Butchery
- Sacred Trust
- Support Officer

Master of Inductii
If Gahlan Surlak is taken then any Legion Tactical Squads in the army may be designated as Augmented Inductii, having received the dubious benefits of the Dominus Nutritor's forbidden medicae lore. These units gain +1 to their Strength characteristic and the Feel No Pain (6+) special rule, but suffer -1 to their BS and are no longer counted as scoring units. These Augmented Inductii squads may only be joined by Surlak or other World Eaters apothecaries – no other Independent Characters may join them and no other characters may be assigned to them. In addition, the opposing player earns no Victory points for destroying the Augmented Inductii in missions where this is relevant.

Narthecium Primus
This artificer-wrought Narthecium confers Feel No Pain (4+) to Surlak and any unit he has joined. Also, any wounds caused by weapons against him or any unit he has joined with the Poison special rule must be re-rolled.

Sacred Trust
In missions where Victory points are scored for destroying units, if Surlak is within 6" of a friendly Space Marine Infantry or Jump Infantry unit wiped out by the enemy, roll a D6. On a 5+ the player whose unit was destroyed also gains a Victory point, as well as the enemy.

Support Officer
If chosen as part of a Primary Detachment, Gahlan Surlak cannot be taken as a compulsory HQ choice.

Exhortation of Butchery
As the Age of Darkness spread across the Imperium, the traitorous World Eaters Legion became ever more insular and savage, the Legion's apothecaries learning techniques to deliberately amplify the Butcher's Nail implants in their brothers, driving them to ever greater heights of homicidal madness.

If a model with this special rule has joined a unit of Infantry with the Legiones Astartes (World Eaters) special rule, then they may if they choose activate this special rule at the start of any Assault phase. Each model in the unit they have joined adds +1 to its attacks profile for the duration of that Assault phase. At the end of the Assault phase, roll a dice for each surviving model in the unit affected by this rule. On any result of a 1, that model is slain and removed from play, with no saves of any kind possible. This rule has no effect on models with the Character special rule.

Additional Traitor World Eaters Legion Special Rule
The Exhortation of Butchery special rule is also added to all Traitor faction Apothecaries and Primus Medicae models with the Legiones Astartes (World Eaters) special rule in games and campaigns set after the Shadow Crusade of 008.M31.

HQ

Once, Gahlan Surlak was an apothecary of the Legiones Astartes World Eaters, his mission to heal the wounds of his battle-brothers that they might return to battle all the faster. As his Legion fell from grace however, this mission drastically changed. At the orders of the Legion's High Command, Surlak focused his duties ever less upon healing the wounded and instead dedicated himself to the induction of Legion Aspirants who cared so little for pain they would never have to be healed – they would win the fight or they would die, there being no middle ground where a Legionary might require medical attention.

It was in the aftermath of the Isstvan betrayal that Surlak had revealed to him the hidden mysteries of blood and flesh, of genes and mutations, when he and a number of his peers were inducted into an inner circle of apothecaries, their high-magus the Chief Apothecary of the Emperor's Children – Fabius. What Surlak and his fellow apothecaries learned from Bile they carried with them to Bodt, where upon Angron's orders they began a program of rapid indoctrination intended to usher in a new generation of Legion Aspirants who, thanks to his bloody artifice, would have no concept of pain, fear or defeat.

Tybalt Marr

Captain of the Sons of Horus 18th Company, The Either, The Lone Wolf

175 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Tybalt Marr	5	5	4	4	3	5	3	10	2+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Cthonian culling blade
- Master-crafted bolt pistol with banestrike ammunition
- Iron halo
- Artificer armour
- Frag & krak grenades

Special Rules
- Independent Character
- Legiones Astartes (Sons of Horus)
- Master of the Legion
- Preferred Enemy (Loyalist Legiones Astartes)
- Warlord (If Tybalt Marr is your army's Warlord, he has the By the Hunter's Moon Trait rather than rolling randomly)

This unit may only be taken as part of a Traitor faction army.

Warlord: By the Hunter's Moon
Any enemy models deployed within 24" of Marr (after Scouts and Infiltrators have been fully deployed) must take a Pinning test at the beginning of the first Game Turn.

Cthonian Culling Blade

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Cthonian culling blade	-	User	-	Melee, Master-crafted, Rending, Duellist's Edge, Murderous Strike

Duellist's Edge: When fighting in a Challenge, Marr gains a +1 bonus to his Initiative value.

Murderous Strike: Attacks with this special rule cause Instant Death on a To Wound roll of 6. Roll any viable saves against this Instant Death-causing wound separately to any other wounds the attack inflicts.

Banestrike Bolt Pistol (Special Ammunition type)

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Banestrike	12"	4	5	Pistol, Banestrike

Banestrike: When rolling To Wound, results of a 6 with this weapon are at AP 3.

HQ

Until the Horus Heresy, Tybalt Marr's most celebrated victory was won in the low mountains of Murder, where he led the 18th Company against the hideous xenos strain of that bloody world. Virtually identical in features to his battle-brother Captain Verulam Moy of the 19th, the two were known as the *'Either and the Or'* by the other officers until Moy's untimely death at Davin.

One of many captains tasked with hunting down the survivors of the Isstvan V Dropsite Massacre, Marr was responsible for the destruction of the Iron Hands Clan-Council at Oqueth Minor. His hunt continued for another three years, during which he came to respect and despise his foe in equal measure. Marr believed he had finally killed Meduson and destroyed his fleet at Arissak, only to discover his enemy had slipped the net and made a direct attack on the Warmaster himself at Dwell. Having taken his suspicions as to the true extent of Meduson's strategy to Horus, Marr was pronounced the *'Lone Wolf'* and tasked with hunting down the Shattered Legions once and for all.

Shadrak Meduson

Storm Walker, Lord of the Sorrgol Clan, Master of the Shattered Legions

195 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Shadrak Meduson	6	5	4	4	3	5	3	10	2+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Archaeotech pistol
- Master-crafted boltgun
- Albian power gladius
- Iron halo
- Artificer armour
- Frag & krak grenades

Special Rules
- Independent Character
- Legiones Astartes (Iron Hands)
- Master of the Shattered Legions
- Warlord (If Shadrak Meduson is your army's Warlord, he has the Raise the Storm Trait rather than rolling randomly)

This unit may only be taken as part of a Loyalist faction army.

Master of the Shattered Legions
Shadrak Meduson has the Master of the Legion special rule, and in addition to Iron Hands Rites of War may select Rites unique to the Raven Guard and Salamanders Legions, counting as having the requisite version of the Legiones Astartes special rule for the purposes of its effects and limitations.

Warlord: Raise the Storm
Once per game, at the beginning of Meduson's controlling player's turn, they may declare the use of this special rule. Until the beginning of their next player turn, all models in their army with the Legions Astartes (Iron Hands), (Raven Guard) or (Salamanders) special rule gain Furious Charge, Hatred and Crusader.

Albian Power Gladius
An artificer-wrought blade of the hardest Albian steel that Meduson has wielded in battle since a time when his Legion was still referred to not as the Iron Hands, but as the Storm Walkers, this weapon is capable of splitting open even Tactical Dreadnought Armour.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Albian power gladius	-	+1	3	Melee, Rending, Master-crafted

HQ

Having arrived at Isstvan V in time to bear witness to the Warmaster's betrayal, it was all Meduson could do to fight clear with as many Iron Hands, Salamanders and Raven Guard as he could rescue. Eight weeks later, the Legion's Clan-Council gathered at Oqueth Minor to take command of the Iron Hands Legion. But their vessel was ambushed and the Council slain by the hand of Tybalt Marr of the Sons of Horus Legion and his Emperor's Children allies.

It fell to Shadrak Meduson to muster the survivors and lead them in a new kind of war that incorporated the battle doctrines of all three Legions. His goal was twofold – exact bloody revenge and slow the Warmaster's advance on Terra. Alloying the disparate elements of the three Legions in his force, Meduson created a hidden network of attack cells that ranged far and wide, launching hit and run attacks against the Traitors while concealing their overall strategy until his most audacious attack to date – against Warmaster Horus himself at the world of Dwell.

Cassian Dracos Reborn

The Dragon Revenant, The Twice-Dead, Avatar of the Sacred Flames

295 points

HQ

Once the lord of the XVIIIth Legion in the days before Vulkan, Cassian was consigned to the eternal half-life of a Dreadnought after suffering mortal wounds in the final battle of the old Salamanders Legion. The shell in which he was entombed was forged by the hand of Vulkan himself and impervious to all but the most deadly of attacks, and even capable of self repair given enough time. At the Dropsite Massacre, Dracos rampaged through the Traitor lines, reliving his first death as the XVIIIth Legion once again faced oblivion. Leaving a trail of dead behind him, Dracos was only stopped by an orbital lance strike that glassed an entire battlefield. Horus and his generals left Isstvan certain that the old warlord's life had been ended along with his Primarch and Legion.

Yet, when Xiaphas Jurr and the crew of the *Ebon Drake* arrived at Isstvan a year later, they were to uncover the battered shell of the Dragon Revenant, far from intact but not yet willing to surrender to his final inevitable death. Cassian Dracos would return to the battlefields of the Imperium to enact his vengeance, but he would not be as once he was. His time beneath the black, blood-soaked sands of Isstvan had left him changed, fey and of unpredictable temper and able to exert a disturbing control over the creations of the Machine God and those bound to them.

				Armour					
	WS	BS	S	Front	Side	Rear	HP	I	A
Cassian Dracos	6	5	6	14	12	10	4	4	4

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Vehicle (Walker, Character)

Wargear
- Two Dreadnought close combat weapons, each of which has an inbuilt Dreadfire heavy flamer (additional attack already included in profile)
- Extra armour
- Smoke launcher
- Searchlight
- Nuncio-vox*

* *See the Legiones Astartes Crusade Army List book.*

Special Rules
- Wrought by Vulkan
- It Will Not Die
- Venerable
- Burning Wrath
- Legiones Astartes (Salamanders)
- Avatar of the Sacred Flames
- The Voice of the Machine

This unit may only be taken as part of a Loyalist faction army.

Avatar of the Sacred Flames
As long as no HQ choices other than Xiaphas Jurr and Nârik Dreygur are included in this army's Primary Detachment, Cassian Dracos Reborn may be selected as the army's Warlord, even though he does not have a Leadership value. He does not roll for his Warlord Trait but uses the Bloody Handed Warlord Trait.

The Voice of the Machine
Cassian Dracos Reborn may use a single Cybertheurgy power (see Cybertheurgy on page 280) per turn. When attempting to use a Cybertheurgy power, Cassian Dracos Reborn uses a Leadership of 7 and may only attempt to use one of the following powers: The Rite of Celerity, The Rite of Eternity, The Rite of Fury, or The Rite of Rededication:

The Rite of Rededication..... Modifier: -1
The chosen target model must be an enemy model. The chosen model's controlling player and Cassian Dracos' player roll off, the player whose model has the greater current Wounds remaining adds +1 to their score. If the player controlling Cassian Dracos Reborn wins the roll-off, he may immediately make a single shooting attack with the chosen model as if it was in their own army. If the opposing player wins the roll-off, the power has no effect.

Dreadfire Heavy Flamers
These weapons may either be fired as two individual heavy flamers, or as a single twin-linked meltagun. This choice must be made at the beginning of the Shooting phase before any dice are rolled for their attacks. If one of the heavy flamers is destroyed then the remaining heavy flamer cannot use this optional attack mode. These weapons benefit from the Legiones Astartes (Salamanders) special rule.

Wrought by Vulkan
Cassian Dracos is immune to all of the effects of the Melta, Armourbane, Sunder and Lance special rules. Any other special rules which either reduce or permanently degrade his Armour value or allow attacks which target him to roll more than one dice when making an Armour Penetration roll have no effect against him.

Burning Wrath
Cassian Dracos may forfeit his usual close combat attacks in order to inflict one automatic S6 (bonus included) AP 4 hit on every model (friend and foe) in base contact with him at Initiative step 1.

Nârik Dreygur

The Gravewalker, Once Consul Praevian of the Iron Warriors, The Revenant's Pawn

135 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Nârik Dreygur	5	5	4	4	3	5	3	9	2+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Master-crafted bolt pistol
- Power fist
- Cortex controller*
- Cortex designator†
- Artificer armour
- Refractor field
- Frag & krak grenades

*See the Legiones Astartes Crusade Army List book.

†See page 232.

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes (Iron Warriors)
- Support Officer
- Master of Cybernetica (any Battle-automata must be selected separately, their points cost is not included in Nârik Dreygur's entry)
- Legion Inductees (Nârik Dreygur)
- The Revenant's Pawn

Legion Inductees (Nârik Dreygur)
The unit of Battle-automata to which Nârik Dreygur is attached gains the Legiones Astartes (Iron Warriors) special rule or one of the following special rules: Furious Charge, Tank Hunters or Scout (when the Scout special rule is selected, it also applies to Nârik Dreygur). These special rules are selected at no additional points cost.

The Revenant's Pawn
Nârik Dreygur may be included in any army that has either Cassian Dracos or Xiaphas Jurr as its Warlord. When included alongside them, he retains his Legiones Astartes (Iron Warriors) special rule, and while within 12" of Cassian Dracos, he gains the Zealot and Rage special rules. In addition, when included in an army alongside Cassian Dracos or Xiaphas Jurr, you may include an additional unit of Legion Veterans with the Legiones Astartes (Iron Warriors) special rule that does not use up a Force Organisation choice and does not count for any minimum required units the army must select. Both Nârik Dreygur and this unit of Veterans are treated as Desperate Allies by all other friendly units other than Cassian Dracos and Xiaphas Jurr.

HQ

Once a respected frontline commander of the Iron Warriors, Dreygur led his company into the fires of battle for ninety years, fearing failure of his Primarch far more than death. At Isstvan, a blank-eyed Raven Guard Moritat left him ruined and Dreygur's defeat cost him the favour of Perturabo, who discarded the broken commander as he would a flawed sidearm. The Apolakron rebuilt Dreygur's shattered body with augmetic implants, grafting a cortex controller directly into his nervous system and inducting the veteran warrior into the ranks of their Order and its technological mysteries.

Dreygur, now known as the Gravewalker, took to the field once again as a Consul Praevian. Shunned by his Primarch and brethren, he quickly came to favour the company of his automaton charges, who showed him more loyalty than those he called 'brothers'. At Epsilon-Stranivar IX, it was the loyalty of these automata that kept him alive to swear revenge upon the Alpha Legion that had abandoned him. Yet through all of these dire events, he remained loyal to his Legion, until Mezoa, where on the basalt plains before the towering Forge Spires, the Dragon Revenant tore down his unflagging loyalty and indomitable determination through some unknown artifice, replacing it with a savage new purpose.

Kheron Ophion of the Kyroptera

Master of the Shroud of Eventide, Captain of the 39th Company, The Coward

165 points

HQ

A long-serving member of the Night Lords Legion raised up from the gutters of Nostramo to captain and set loose among the stars, for seven decades Ophion fought the wars of the Great Crusade, forging a legacy of solid service. Such stubborn bravery was an aberration amongst a Legion dedicated to practicality and the subtle, if gruesome, prosecution of war, and many of his peers saw him as flawed.

At the bloody end of the Thramas Crusade, as the Dark Angels vented their wrath against the unprepared fleet of the Night Lords, it was the intervention of two ships that allowed so many of their kin to escape. One was the *Nightfall*, the VIIIth Legion's flagship, the other was the *Shroud of Eventide*, a line cruiser that under Ophion's command turned annihilation into mere decimation. This unexpected bravery saw him appointed to the ranks of the restored Kyroptera, the shadowy council who ruled the Night Lords in their Primarch's absence. Ophion led his contingent, some 9,000 warriors, to the Nostramo sector. There he intended to rally those scattered by the Night Lords' defeat and bring them back into the greater war, to join the final push on Terra. Yet these plans were to be upset by the arrival of an unexpected foe and with Ophion lost and presumed dead, the Nostramo sector fell back into chaos and strife.

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Kheron Ophion	6	5	4	4	3	5	4	10	3+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- The Bloody Aegis
- Power axe
- Refractor field
- Volkite serpenta
- Power armour
- Melta bombs
- Frag & krak grenades

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes (Night Lords)
- Master of the Legion
- Independent Character
- The Coward
- Warlord (if Kheron Ophion is the army's Warlord, he has the Aberrant Bravery Trait rather than rolling randomly)

This unit may only be taken as part of a Traitor faction army.

The Bloody Aegis
Crafted from fragments of the broken hull plating of Ophion's first command, the *Killing Whisper*, which was destroyed over Pragus as it sought to stand off an entire Fra'al conclave hounding the retreat of the 67th Expeditionary Fleet, the Bloody Aegis stands as a personal reminder from the Praetor of the 67th of the cost of such bravery. As much a mark of shame and cruel jest as a trophy of glory, the Bloody Aegis bears few marks of expert craftsmanship, but forged of the same metal as the hulls of void craft and covered in vicious barbs of serrated ceramite, it presents a dire obstacle to the foe.

The Bloody Aegis increases Ophion's invulnerable save to 3+ in close combat. In addition, any model that targets Ophion with one or more attacks in an assault and scores an unmodified 1 on at least one of those dice, has its WS halved when targeted by any of Ophion's close combat attacks until the beginning of the next Game Turn.

The Coward
Once Ophion has lost at least a single wound, he gains the Feel No Pain (4+) special rule. When reduced to a single remaining wound, Ophion replaces Feel no Pain (4+) with Feel No Pain (3+).

Warlord: Aberrant Bravery
As long as Ophion's controlling player has less Victory points than his opponent, Ophion and any Night Lords units within 12" of him gain the Stubborn special rule. Additionally, the controlling player may always choose to re-roll, or have his opponent re-roll, any failed dice roll to determine if the game continues for another turn.

Xiaphas Jurr

Initiate of the Igniax, Son of Proximal, The Prophet of Fire

145 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Xiaphas Jurr	5	5	4	4	2	5	3	10	2+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- The Burning Halo
- Bolt pistol
- Master-crafted power maul
- Artificer armour
- Dragonscale storm shield*
- Frag & krak grenades

* *See the Legiones Astartes Isstvan Campaign Legions book.*

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes (Salamanders)
- Zealot
- Prophet of the Flame
- Warlord (if Xiaphas Jurr is the army's Warlord, he has the Beacon of Hope Trait rather than rolling randomly)
- Independent Character

This unit may only be taken as part of a Loyalist faction army.

The Burning Halo
Bestowed upon Xiaphas Jurr by Nomus Rhy'tan, the Seneschal of Nocturne, upon the departure of his mission to Isstvan, the Burning Halo is a force field projector created by Vulkan himself. More intricately wrought than the devices of lesser artificers, the Burning Halo projects a powerful defensive barrier against harm, and when struck converts kinetic energy into an explosion of searing flame, directed back at the attacker.

The Burning Halo provides a 4+ invulnerable save, and if the bearer makes a successful invulnerable save against a close combat hit of Strength 5 or higher, all models in base contact with the bearer suffer a single Str 4 AP - hit.

Prophet of the Flame
Ever steeped in the superstitious lore of the scaver tribes of ancient Proximal, Xiaphas Jurr arrived at the war-scoured ruins of Isstvan V desperate for hope. When he left that benighted world, his faith was renewed and a strange power had taken root in the once benign rituals he practised. Where once he had sought desperately for answers, now his prophecies held the power to define the future; it was this power that ultimately led Xiaphas Jurr and his Disciples of the Flame down a dark path to an end long since hidden within the Salamanders' sealed vaults.

Xiaphas Jurr counts as a Psyker with a Mastery Level of 1, and has the Prescience and Precognition powers from the Divination Discipline. However, when making a Psychic test, Xiaphas Jurr must reduce his Leadership value to 7 for the purposes of that test.

Warlord: Beacon of Hope
Note that if Cassian Dracos is included in the same army as Xiaphas Jurr, then Xiaphas Jurr may not be selected as its Warlord.

As long as Xiaphas Jurr has not been removed from play as a casualty and is not held in Reserve or embarked on a Transport vehicle, his controlling player may re-roll the first failed Pinning test or Morale check of each Game Turn.

HQ

Taken as tithe from the scaver tribes of ancient Proximal, one of the many worlds brought to Compliance by the Salamanders in the earliest days of the Great Crusade, Xiaphas Jurr was raised to the ranks of the Igniax and trained as a Chaplain in the final years before the outbreak of the Horus Heresy, never seeing battle as part of the Emperor's Crusade. Reckoned amongst the most promising of the officer-recruits who remained on Nocturne in the wake of Vulkan's muster for the Isstvan campaign, he was chosen by the Keeper of Nocturne, Nomus Rhy'tan, to lead the mission to investigate the Primarch's fate.

Given to superstition and obscure ritual, as were many among the tribes of Proximal, whose unpredictable, rad-scoured world had little pity for those that lived upon it, Jurr accepted his mission with much zeal, seeing it as the first step towards a grand destiny. It was this fervour, verging as it did on religious fanaticism, which drew the men of the Nocturne garrison to him, dispirited as they were in the wake of dire rumours of the fighting at Isstvan, and bound them to him in the dark odyssey that was to follow.

New Legiones Astartes Special Rules

The following section provides new special rules for the Blood Angels, Dark Angels and White Scars Legions, *and these are to be used in conjunction with the army list provided in the* Legiones Astartes – Isstvan Campaign Legions book.

Legiones Astartes Crusade Army List Appendix: The Blood Angels

"Know then people of Adryantis that for your crimes you have been judged, for your degradation you have been found wanting and for your pride you shall be punished.

For too long have you allowed greed and ambition to be your master, and in your hubris you have sought to deny the unification of Mankind. Now your end is at hand.

That there are many among you who are innocent we have no doubt, but even for the sake of these we will not stay our hand. But know that for this tragedy, my sons and I shall weep as we put your worlds to the sword."

The Angel Sanguinius

General vox broadcast issued prior to the extermination of the Adryantis Cluster

Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels)

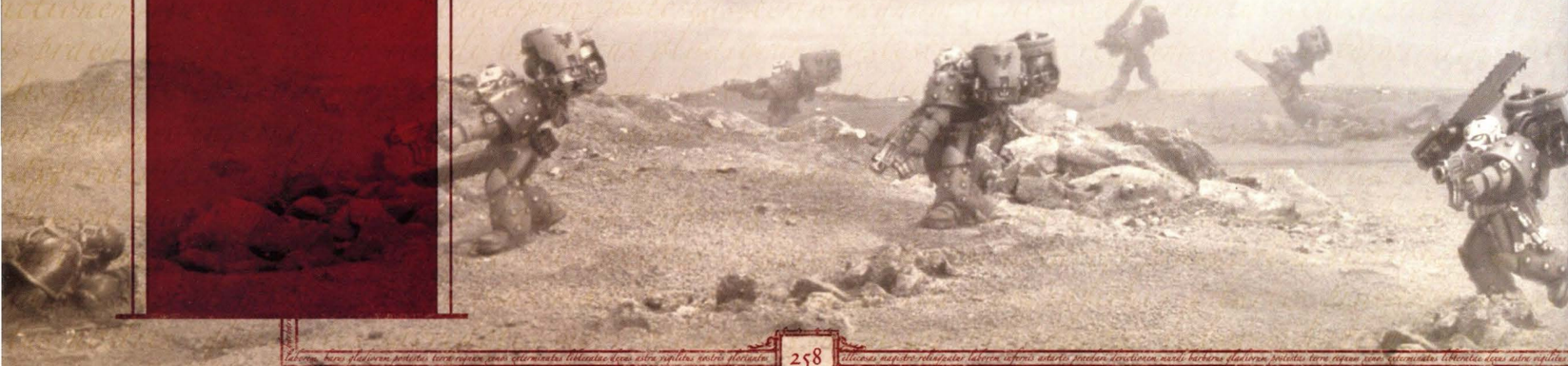
The Space Marines of the Emperor's Legions are genetically engineered, psycho-indoctrinated warriors with superhuman abilities and minds and souls tempered for war. In addition, each individual Legion has its own idiosyncrasies and character – the product of their gene-seed and unique warrior culture.

The Blood Angels, of all the warriors of the Legiones Astartes, evidenced perhaps the greatest degree of transformation of their flesh from their human origins to the Space Marines they would become. This transformation's effects were even more pronounced and more fundamental than that of the Space Wolves or the Salamanders, both of which featured unique stigmata of their own. The aggressive over-writing of the aspirant's gene-helix by the blood of their Primarch was capable of transfiguring the rad-scarred and twisted inhabitants of Baal to create 'perfected' warriors, living icons of the physical ideal of the Legiones Astartes, each one an echo of their Primarch, called *'the Angel'*, Sanguinius in his fearsome glory. There was a price however for this power, and the process of transformation was a more arcane, elaborate and painful one than that endured by any other Legion. Even with the direct infusion of its Primarch's own blood to stabilise the process, the rate of fatalities among aspirants was frighteningly high. There were also those who argued that the mental scars suffered by those who survived the change were just as deep, instilling a sense of cause and purpose that manifested as unflinching, unreasoning fanaticism bordering on madness, a certainty which could in mere moments turn to insane fury when that purpose was challenged.

In battle, the Blood Angels Legion was the incarnation of the Emperor's wrath upon those who rejected the gift of Unity, and their coming often nothing less than apocalyptic judgement delivered upon the guilty from on high. Their arrival on a non-Compliant human world was heralded by blazing assaults on the strongest points of enemy resistance. Descending from the heavens on wings of fire, the Legion conquered by their preternatural fury as well as by the dread and awe they created. In the wake of their attacks, their chosen targets were scoured from existence and in their battle's witnessing, whole worlds fell to their knees cowering before the wrath and splendour of these 'red angels', less they too perish beneath their burning blades. Against the xenos, no such quarter was given, and the wrath of the Blood Angels was as a tide of unrelenting carnage that only gave way once complete extermination had been achieved.

All models and units with this special rule are subject to the following provisions:

- **Legiones Astartes:** Units with this special rule may always attempt to Regroup at their normal Leadership value, regardless of casualties.
- **Encarmine Fury:** When fighting in an assault and using a Melee type weapon, any model with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule requires one lower result To Wound than they would normally, to a minimum of 2+. This effect applies regardless of the weapon they are using (for example, if using a Str 4 Melee weapon and attacking a target with a Toughness of 4, the Blood Angel will require a 3+ To Wound rather than the usual 4+).
- **Without Remorse, Without Relent:** Models with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule must always make Sweeping Advances if they are able to, and may not voluntarily Go To Ground.
- **Host of Angels:** With the exception of Dedicated Transports, a Blood Angels Detachment may not have more units with the Vehicle type than it has units with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule. Note that because of this, certain Rites of War may be unavailable to Blood Angels armies.



Legion Specific Wargear

The Blood Angels Legion has access to the following items of special wargear:

The Fires of Heaven

The Legion's tactical doctrines were heavily focused on the use of powerful shock assaults to shatter an enemy's resistance in a single, devastating blow. Because of this, flamer and melta weaponry was strongly favoured at the tactical level, both because of its effectiveness and its ability to provide a fearsome display in action.

- Any model with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule with access to a volkite serpenta as part of their Wargear options may instead take a hand flamer for +15 points.
- Any model with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule with access to a plasma pistol as part of their Wargear options may instead take an inferno pistol for +15 points.
- Any Praetor, Centurion or Consul with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule with access to a power fist as part of their Wargear options may instead take a Blade of Perdition for +20 points.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Special
Hand flamer	Template	3	6	Pistol
Inferno pistol	6"	8	1	Pistol, Melta
Blade of Perdition	-	User	2	Melee, Master-crafted, Two-handed, Deathfire

Deathfire: Every wound caused by this weapon is doubled to two wounds. Roll to save against each wound separately.

Prototype Weapon: Iliastus Pattern Assault Cannon

A prototype weapons system designed as a more compact and portable variant of the highly successful Kheres pattern, it was, as can be divined by its pattern designation, first developed on the Iliastus Satellite in the Sol System by the Dyzanique techno-esoteric cult. This was a secretive organisation whose fealty to the Emperor predated his alliance with Mars. The assault cannon, under field testing with the VIIth and IXth Legions before the outbreak of the War of the Heresy, evidenced formidable firepower, but was still prone to catastrophic failure under rare conditions of heavy use.

Any Blood Angels model (including vehicles) equipped with heavy flamers may exchange them for an Iliastus pattern assault cannon for +5 points each. Legion Predator Tanks may also exchange their Predator cannon with a twin-linked Iliastus pattern assault cannon for Free.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Special
Iliastus assault cannon	24"	6	4	Heavy 4, Rending, Malfunction

Malfunction: When rolling To Hit with this weapon, if three or more results of '1' are rolled then the assault cannon malfunctions and may not be used again in the game. Make a note on your army list or otherwise mark that this is the case.

The blood is the life,
The blood is the way,
The blood is forever.

Translation of memetic neo-encoding used by the IXth Legion during ritual psycho-indoctrination

"We are the sword of fire, we are the glory of the future made manifest, we are the last thing you will ever behold."

Commander Kysilidos Rais,
Legiones Astartes Blood Angels
Canticles of War, Vol II

Blood Angels Unique Rite of War: The Day of Revelation

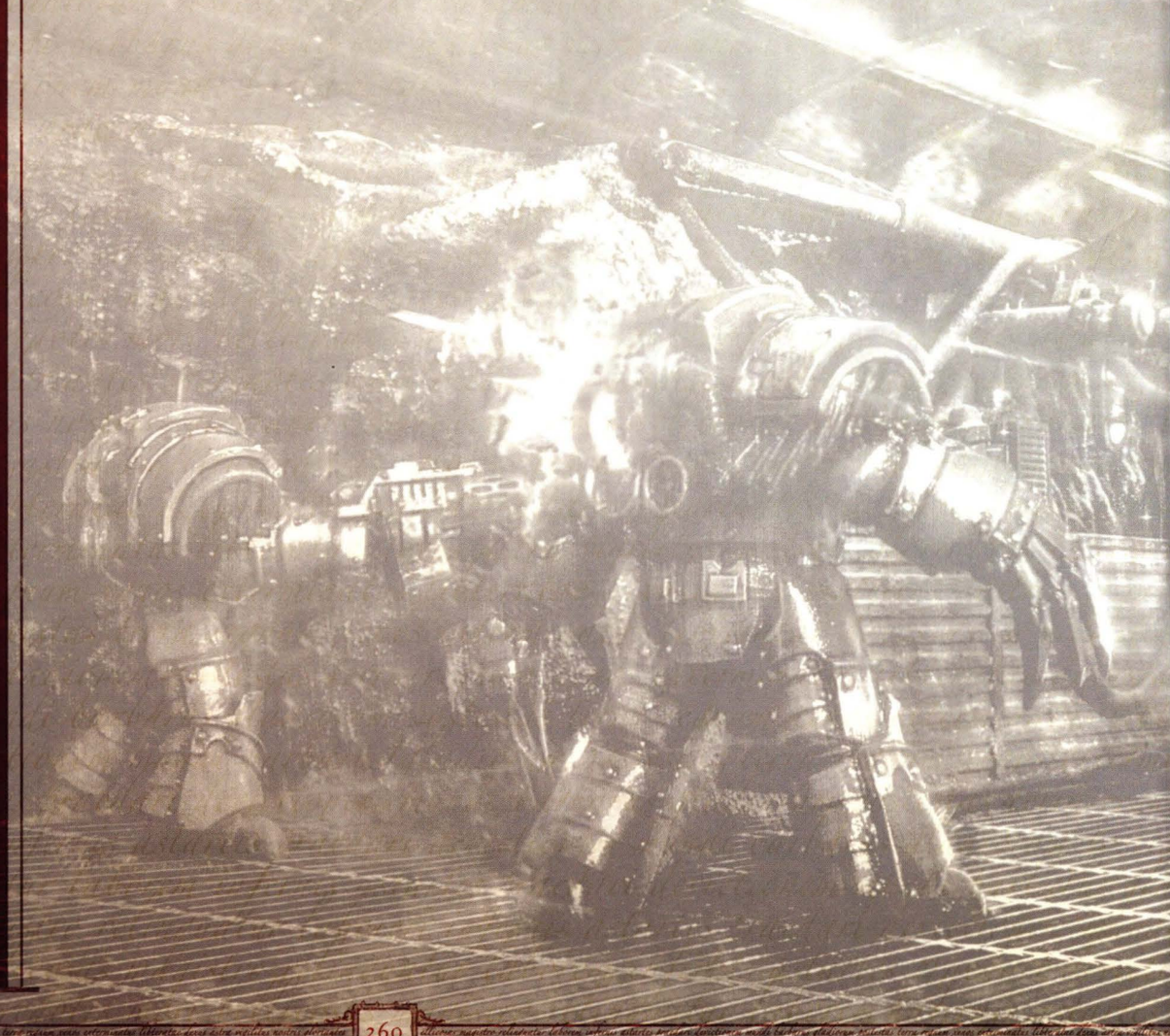
Throughout the Great Crusade, the IXth Legion became renowned for its 'wars of ultimatum'. These campaigns of open domination against non-Compliant worlds began with Sanguinius or one of his praetors affording a world one opportunity to embrace Unification or face a 'Day of Revelation', in which they would suffer the fury of the Blood Angels unleashed. Many foes confronted by the gathered IXth Legion hosts were overcome with dread and awe, and capitulated without hesitation. Those who did not would see the shining countenance of the Angel Sanguinius transformed into savage fury as blinding destruction was delivered from on high.

Effects

- **Cometh the Host:** Jump Infantry squads which are a part of this detachment must arrive via Deep Strike on the first turn of the game and do not need to roll for Reserves.
- **With Fire & Thunder:** All Deep Striking units in this detachment gain a 5+ cover save on the Game Turn they arrive in play. Place a marker by the unit or otherwise note this to be the case.
- **The Opening of the Seal:** All ranged weapons carried by Infantry and Jump Infantry units which are a part of this detachment gain the Pinning special rule in the Shooting phase of any player turn in which they Deep Strike.
- **The Judgement of Angels:** All units which are a part of this detachment and have the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule gain +1 Initiative on the turn they charge into an assault.
- **By Honour Bound:** Characters with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule must always accept a Challenge if one is offered in combat. If multiple eligible characters are present in the combat, the controlling player may choose which one answers the Challenge as normal.

Limitations

- Compulsory HQ and Troops choices for this detachment must be made up of units equipped with jump packs.
- Detachments using this Rite of War must take a compulsory Fast Attack choice as part of their force which must also have either the Flyer or Deep Strike special rule.
- Primary Detachments using this Rite of War may not take any fortifications, Sentry Guns or Lords of War other than Flyers or the Primarch Sanguinius.



Blood Angels Unique Rite of War: The Day of Sorrows

Just as the IXth Legion was famed for their set piece shock assault tactics, so they were also famed for their ability, when pressed, to stand against any who would overwhelm them, no matter the odds and no matter the foe, and even in their death throes, drag their enemies down with them to destruction. To even their brother Legiones Astartes, such feats of resilience sometimes seemed to border on the preternatural and could be laid to no single tactical plan nor doctrine nor biological trait, but rather had their origins within their unshakable will to endure, as if somehow fuelled by the rage and grief wrought in their hearts by the deaths of their battle-brothers. To the Blood Angels themselves, such battles became known as the 'days of sorrows', when few would stand against many and sell their lives dear, their names and deeds to be reborn eternally in the most sacrosanct of the Legion's rites of battle and remembrance.

When the bulk of the Legion was missing for many years at Signus Prime, those few lone ships and garrisons which remained in an Imperium riven by war would find themselves time and again outnumbered by their foes. Many were their own days of sorrow, but far greater was the number of the Traitor foes who died along with them as they passed burning into the night.

Effects

- **Resolute Defence:** Any unit with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule which is a part of a detachment which uses this Rite of War cannot be Pinned, and in addition is Stubborn when within 3" of any objective in their own deployment zone.
- **Aura of Wrath:** Any unit which suffers a Morale check as a result of losing an assault in which the majority of the enemy models have the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule, suffers an additional -1 penalty to their Leadership value when taking the test. Units which are immune to Fear are immune to this ability.
- **By Blood Sworn:** When any unit with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule which is a part of a detachment which uses this Rite of War is reduced to 50% or less of its starting models, the remaining models gain the Feel No Pain (5+) special rule from the beginning of their next turn – this lasts for the remainder of the game.

Limitations

- **Bloody-handed:** Any unit with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule which is part of a detachment which uses this Rite of War must always make Sweeping Advances, and Characters which are a part of these units must issue and accept Challenges in combat where applicable. The Blood Angels player however may choose which of their Characters does this if they have more than one in the combat.
- **To the Bitter Dregs:** Any unit with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule which is a part of a detachment which uses this Rite of War that has been reduced to 50% or less of its starting number of models counts as being destroyed at the end of the game for the purposes of Victory points where these are used, and no longer counts as a scoring unit. Note that Characters attached to these units are unaffected.

"Do not speak to me of victory. I count nothing as victory while one Traitor heart still beats, or while any work they have built still stands. There can be no victory until even the last memories of them are purged from the mind of man."

Host Captain Marren Vagne,
Legiones Astartes Blood Angels
Battle of Talagusa Station

Legiones Astartes Appendix: The White Scars

"Those who are skilled in the arts of war do not allow anger to rule them; those who have faith in their prowess are not guided by fear. Thus the wise have won before they fight, and only the fool must fight to win."

Excerpt from
The Wisdom of Qin Xa

Legiones Astartes (White Scars)

The Space Marines of the Emperor's Legions are genetically engineered, psycho-indoctrinated warriors with superhuman abilities and minds and souls tempered for war. In addition, each individual Legion has its own idiosyncrasies and character – the product of their gene-seed and unique warrior culture.

A bolt of lightning in clear skies, a sudden gale from an unexpected quarter – the White Scars are war's sudden and merciless onslaught. Swift action and a joy for the rush of combat and clash of blades are the hallmarks of their battles, tempered by a quiet and hidden wisdom that few took the time to uncover. The White Scars thrive in the chaotic heart of battle, anticipating its vicissitudes and flowing with them, always to be found where the foe is weakest, where they were least expected, and leaving only cold corpses in their wake. They were the Great Crusade's pathfinders, the bleak wind that ran ahead of its serried armies culling the weak and harrying the strong that they might fall more easily to those who followed. There were many victories claimed by the Great Crusade that would not have been possible without the depredations caused by these warriors.

All models and units with this special rule are subject to the following provisions:

- **Legiones Astartes:** Units with this special rule may always attempt to Regroup at their normal Leadership value, regardless of casualties.
- **Swift Action:** On any turn in which a unit with this special rule ends the Movement phase at least 6" (or 12" if the unit is a Vehicle or of the Bike or Jetbike type) from the point where it began the phase, in the Movement phase and/or Assault phase it gains the following benefits until the beginning of its controlling player's next turn:
  - Re-roll failed To Wound rolls of a 1 with all attacks.
  - Gain a cover save of 6+ or improve an existing cover save by +1, to a maximum of 3+.
- **The Eye of the Storm:** Renowned for their ability to arrive unannounced and unexpected, the White Scars use their mobility to dictate the flow of any battle in which they fight. An army whose Warlord has the Legiones Astartes (White Scars) special rule may add +1 to the result when rolling to determine which side will take the first turn in a mission or to Seize the Initiative, as well as to the first Reserves roll of each turn.
- **To Laugh in Death's Face:** An army whose Primary Detachment has the Legiones Astartes (White Scars) special rule must take a Fast Attack choice before taking any Heavy Support choices. This special rule does not apply when playing Zone Mortalis missions.
- **Born in the Saddle:** All models with the Legiones Astartes (White Scars) special rule have the Skilled Rider special rule.

Legion Specific Wargear

The White Scars Legion has access to the following items of special wargear:

Power Glaive

Based on the ancient pole arms of Mundus Planus, the power glaive is as much a mark of status amongst the White Scars as it is a weapon of war. Known in the language of the steppes tribes led by Jhagatai Khan as the Rising Moon Blade, the weapon is known both for its intimidating weight as well as the graceful sweeping strikes that characterise its use. Many of the blades in use among the White Scars are ancient weapons, fitted with power generators and field emitters for use in the Emperor's Great Crusade, and proved equally deadly against those who were once their brothers in the dark years of the Horus Heresy.

Any character with the Legion Astartes (White Scars) special rule with access to power weapons as an option may instead take a power glaive for +15 points.

	Range	Str	AP	Type
Power glaive	-	User/+1	3/2	Melee, Versatile

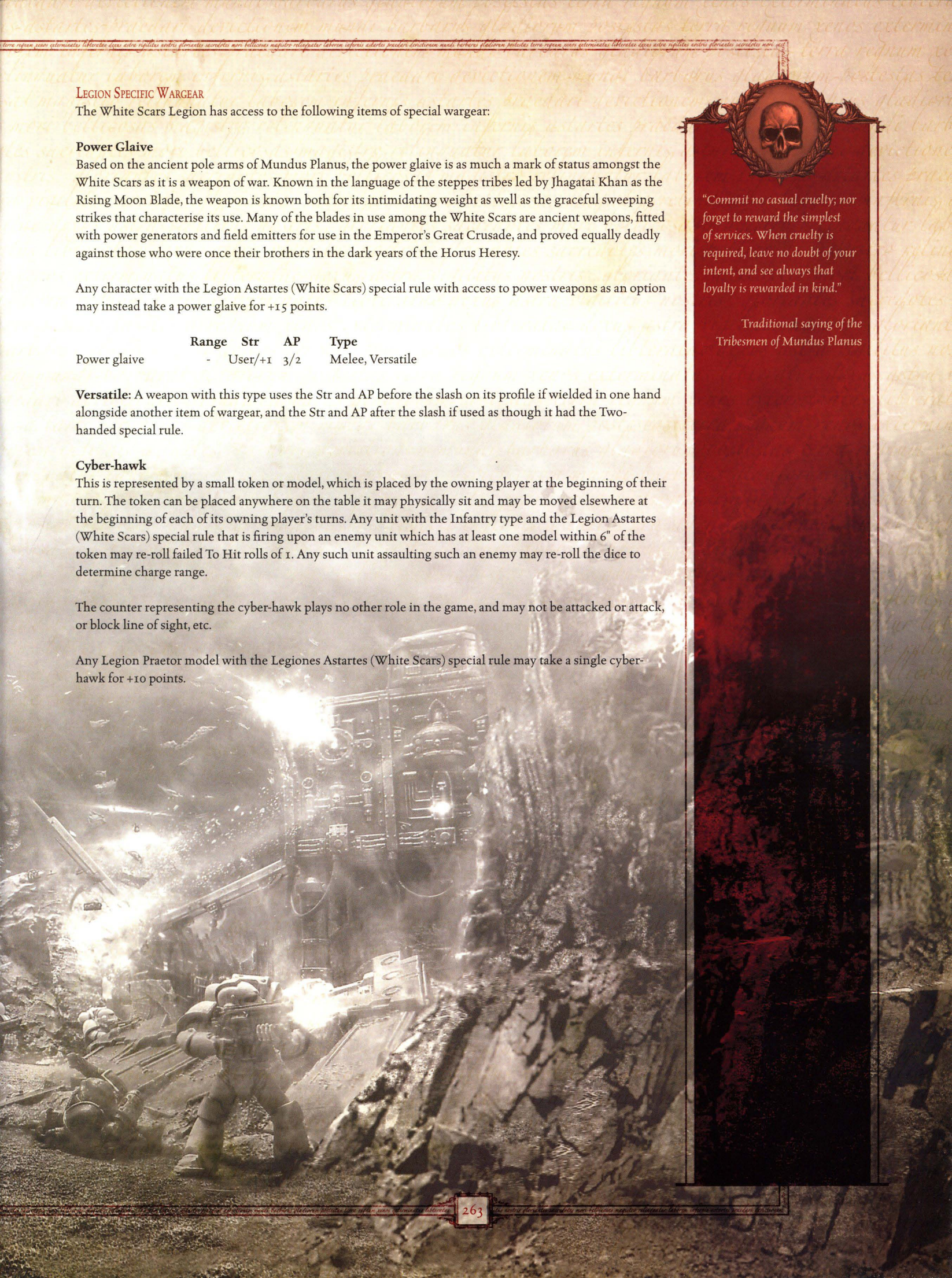
Versatile: A weapon with this type uses the Str and AP before the slash on its profile if wielded in one hand alongside another item of wargear, and the Str and AP after the slash if used as though it had the Two-handed special rule.

Cyber-hawk

This is represented by a small token or model, which is placed by the owning player at the beginning of their turn. The token can be placed anywhere on the table it may physically sit and may be moved elsewhere at the beginning of each of its owning player's turns. Any unit with the Infantry type and the Legion Astartes (White Scars) special rule that is firing upon an enemy unit which has at least one model within 6" of the token may re-roll failed To Hit rolls of 1. Any such unit assaulting such an enemy may re-roll the dice to determine charge range.

The counter representing the cyber-hawk plays no other role in the game, and may not be attacked or attack, or block line of sight, etc.

Any Legion Praetor model with the Legiones Astartes (White Scars) special rule may take a single cyber-hawk for +10 points.



"Commit no casual cruelty; nor forget to reward the simplest of services. When cruelty is required, leave no doubt of your intent, and see always that loyalty is rewarded in kind."

Traditional saying of the Tribesmen of Mundus Planus

In war the warrior's first thought must always be to hurt the enemy, to cause him pain and bleed his armies by whatever means. Every march, reconnaissance or deployment must be a cutting strike to the foe; for when undertaken as a numb ritual of war, these actions are worthless.

Excerpt from
The Wisdom of Qin Xa

White Scars Unique Rite of War: Chogorian Brotherhood

Favoured by the Chogorian recruits to the Vth Legion as the ideal organisation of a fighting body of troops, the Brotherhood was also employed by many of the Legion's Terran recruits. Composed of a body of Legionaries mounted entirely on fleet warbikes and Scimitar jetbikes, or in other transport vehicles, these formations were ideal for harrying campaigns or lightning strike warfare. When faced with a dug-in foe, some elements of the Brotherhood would dismount to fight on foot, moving to encircle the foe and support their brethren.

Effects

- **Ride like the Wind:** Skyhunter and Outrider squads count as Troops choices and scoring units.
- **Lightning Strike:** Built around a core of mounted Space Marines, the Brotherhoods of the White Scars used these troops as dedicated shock troops, while the slower elements of the Brotherhood encircled the enemy and took up positions to support the breaches opened up by their brethren. As a result, certain types of units gain additional special rules as noted below:
  - All models with the Bike or Jetbike type gain the Hit & Run special rule.
  - Any Infantry unit that does not begin play aboard a vehicle with the Transport type, or any vehicle with more than 3 Hull Points that does not have the Fast type, must begin play in Reserve if the mission allows it.
  - Any Infantry unit in which there are no models equipped with Heavy, Salvo or Ordnance weapons gains the Hit & Run and Outflank special rules.
  - Any unit with the Infantry type that contains one or more models armed with a weapon with the Heavy, Salvo or Ordnance type gains the Outflank special rule.

Limitations

- The army's Warlord must be mounted on either a Space Marine Bike or Scimitar Jetbike.
- All compulsory Troops choices must be either Skyhunter or Outrider units.
- The army may not have more Heavy Support choices than Fast Attack choices.

White Scars / Shattered Legion Unique Rite of War: The Sagyar Mazan

The people of Chogoris are possessed of great wisdom and capable of deep compassion, but these characteristics are tempered by a fierce and uncompromising sense of justice that can lead them to acts of apparent cruelty when discipline or honour is compromised. Within the White Scars Legion, outright disobedience or catastrophic failure is rewarded with death, delivered by the hand of a warrior's superior. Occasionally however, this punishment might be commuted to exile by a merciful leader sympathetic of mitigating circumstances. Those exiled from their Brotherhood are known as penitents, or the 'Sagyar Mazan', and it is their fate to seek out an honourable death and in so doing, wash away any stain of dishonour.

This Rite of War may only be taken by a Master of the Legion with the Legiones Astartes (White Scars) special rule, and only then when he is leading an army assembled using the Shattered Legions Age of Darkness Theme presented on page 202.

Effects

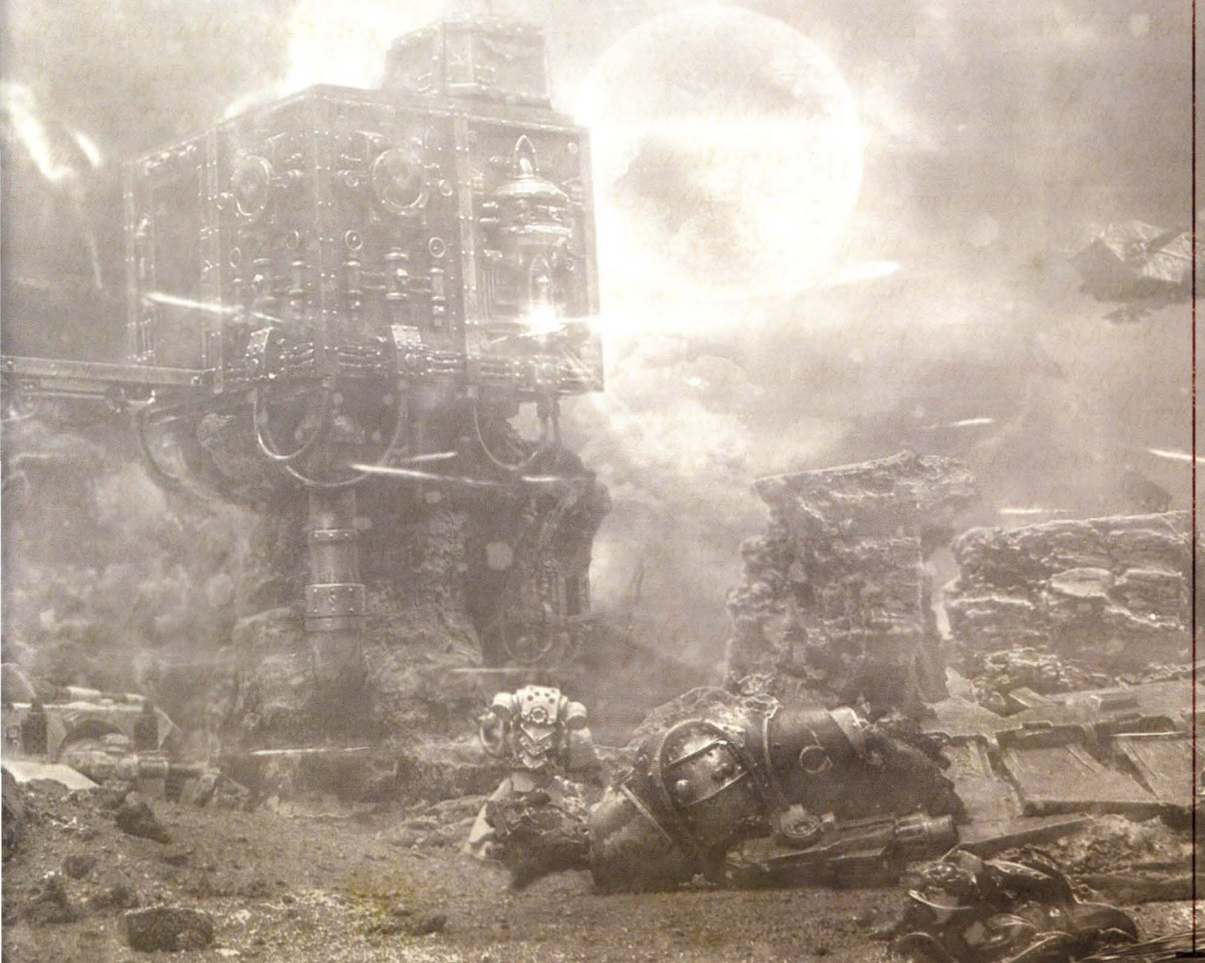
- **Death Seekers:** At the end of any game in which Victory points are used to determine the winner, roll a D6 for every unit with the Legiones Astartes special rule in this detachment that has been destroyed and in so doing yielded Victory points to the opponent. On a roll of 4 or 5, no Victory points are awarded, while on a 6, no Victory points are awarded and the owning side earns an additional Victory point.
- **Serpent's Eye:** All models with the Legiones Astartes special rule are Fearless for the first turn of any assault.

Limitations

- This Rite of War may only be used by a Loyalist army.
- The army may never contain more vehicles than it has units with the Infantry type.

"While the enemy yet draws breath, do not linger in comfort. Shun those trinkets of war that slow your charge. Travel by dark and lonely paths to the enemy. Accept battle on its own terms and triumph by your own skill, and become a warrior of purpose and renown."

Garhelin of Thule,
Brotherhood Captain
of the Vth Legion



Legiones Astartes Crusade Army List Appendix: The Dark Angels

"...And there came a great host of seraphim of dark raiment and shadowed wing, bearing each in one hand the scourge and in the other the hourglass, and by this host was the judgment of the heavens delivered, and by their savage weapons were worlds made as dust."

The Escaton of the Apocrypha Terra Chronicle IX

Legiones Astartes (Dark Angels)

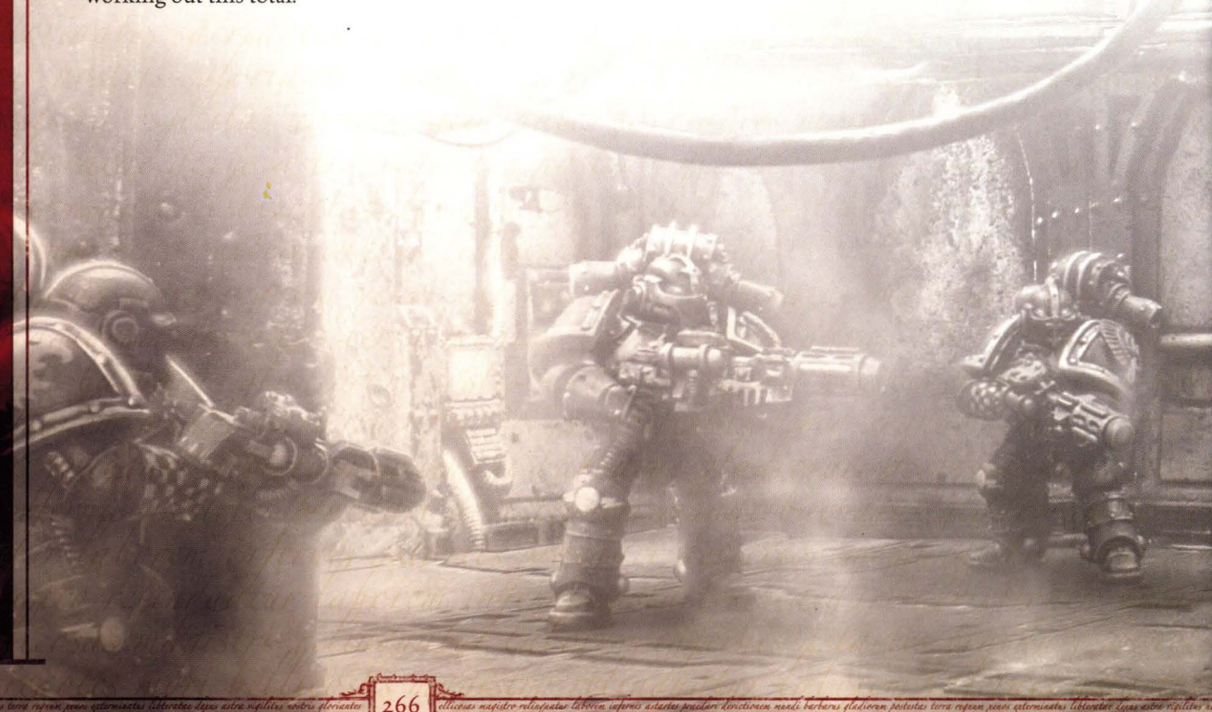
The Space Marines of the Emperor's Legions are genetically engineered, psycho-indoctrinated warriors with superhuman abilities and minds and souls tempered for war. In addition, each individual Legion has its own idiosyncrasies and character – the product of their gene-seed and unique warrior culture.

The Dark Angels were the first of the Emperor's Space Marine Legions, and in their earliest incarnation fought as the personal army of the Master of Humanity in the dawning years of the Great Crusade and in the shadowed campaigns that preceded it. As the prototype of what were to become the Legiones Astartes, they served both as the template for the more specialised Legions that were to come after them and a standard by which these successors would be measured. Once the most numerous and powerful of the Space Marine Legions, their numbers would be depleted and primacy ended by decades of savage warfare, particularly in the wars of the Rangdan Xenocides, one of the most apocalyptic campaigns of the Great Crusade. The scars of these battles would change them, as would their reunification with their Primarch Lion El'Jonson and the introduction of fresh blood from his adopted world of Caliban. A death world dominated by a warlike, feudal society of techno-barbarians, Caliban's warrior orders provided fertile ground for the Legion's regeneration, and its martial codes and practices were extensively incorporated and adopted by the rebuilding Legion.

Unyielding, technologically capable, ruthless and insular, the Dark Angels at the time of the Horus Heresy were once again a powerful and highly independent Legion, used to operating on its own to conduct large scale campaigns and Compliance actions. Because of this, the fear of the I[st] Legion's intervention led the machinations of the Warmaster to ensure that when his treacherous plans came to fruition, the Dark Angels had been despatched to the outer edges of the Imperium where they would be unable to interfere, at least for a time. As the Horus Heresy progressed however, the power of this Legion would make itself known, savaging the Night Lords at Thramas and going on to unleash destruction on an unprecedented scale during the later years of the Age of Darkness when they crushed Traitor world after Traitor world across the southern galactic zone.

All models and units with this special rule are subject to the following provisions:

- **Legiones Astartes:** Units with this special rule may always attempt to Regroup at their normal Leadership value, regardless of casualties.
- **Mastery of the Blade:** When fighting in an assault with one of the following weapons: combat blade, chainsword, heavy chainsword, power sword, Terranic greatsword, Calibanite war blade and paragon blades modelled as swords, and when fighting a model with an equal WS, a model with this special rule strikes on a 3+.
- **Covenant of Death:** For the I[st] Legion, no victory is complete unless a foe is slain outright or utterly brought to ruin. If at the end of the game, the opposing force has an equal or greater number of units in play than an army which has Dark Angels as its Primary Detachment (including any allied units in the total) the opposing force gains an additional D3 Victory points. Fleeing units do not count towards working out this total.



Legion Specific Wargear

The Dark Angels Legion has access to the following items of special wargear:

The Weapons of Old Night

As the I[st] Legion, the Dark Angels were originally outfitted with a panoply of arms drawn not from the fruits of the Emperor's pact with Mars, but instead from the arsenal of the Unification Wars of Ancient Terra; relic weapons and technologies of great potency but often difficult to replicate and even treacherous, many of which would be later forbidden. Long after the other Legions were formed, and the Great Crusade ratified and standardised much of the Legiones Astartes wargear so that it could be replicated on Forge Worlds across the Imperium, the Dark Angels retained many of these ancient and potent relics, as well as the techno-arcana that resided within them. These they continued to employ solely within the Legion; weapons whose secrets were never fully yielded to Mars or their Space Marine brethren by the Emperor's own command.

- Any character model with the Legiones Astartes (Dark Angels) special rule with access to a power sword as part of their Wargear options may instead take a Calibanite war blade for +10 points instead, or exchange a power sword that is part of their basic equipment for a Calibanite war blade for Free.
- Any model with the Legiones Astartes (Dark Angels) special rule with access to a plasma gun as part of their Wargear options may instead take a plasma repeater for +20 points. In the case of units with multiple plasma guns, all such weapons in the same unit must be so upgraded if this option is chosen.
- Any Praetor, Centurion or Consul with the Legiones Astartes (Dark Angels) special rule with access to a power fist as part of their Wargear options may instead take a Terranic greatsword for +15 points.
- **Special Issue Ammunition:** Stasis shells may be taken on models with the Legions Astartes (Dark Angels) special rule equipped with a grenade launcher, twin-linked grenade launchers or missile launchers as an additional ammunition type for +5 points per model.
- **Special Issue Ammunition:** Molecular acid shells may be taken on models with the Legions Astartes (Dark Angels) special rule and Dreadnoughts (of any type) in a Dark Angels detachment equipped with heavy bolters or twin-linked heavy bolters as an additional ammunition type for +5 points per model.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Special
Terranic greatsword	-	+2	3	Melee, Two-handed, Instant Death
Calibanite war blade	-	+1	3	Melee
Plasma repeater	12"	6	2	Salvo 2/3, Twin-linked, Gets Hot
Stasis shell (grenade launcher)	12"	3	-	Assault 1, Blast (3"), Stasis Anomaly
Stasis shell (missile)	24"	4	-	Heavy 1, Blast (3"), Stasis Anomaly
Molecular acid shells (heavy bolter)	36"	2	D6*	Heavy 3, Poison (2+)

**Roll each time the weapon is fired.*

Stasis Anomaly

All models in a unit hit by one or more weapons with this special rule suffer a -1 penalty to their Weapon Skill and Initiative (to a minimum of 1) until the end of the turn.

"The realm that divides its scholarly arts from its arts of war will have its thinking done by cowards and its fighting done by fools."

The Helic Epigraphia, As incorporated into the Book of Arms of the I[st] Legion

"The dark-winged emissaries of death that the imagination of man has been haunted by in dreams since time, have now been made manifest. How then will the universe now weep to see the terrors our children will accomplish?"

Fleet Master Micajah Temple
Hereditary Siridar Baron
of the Saturnyne Holdfast

Dark Angels Unique Rite of War: Ravenwing Protocol

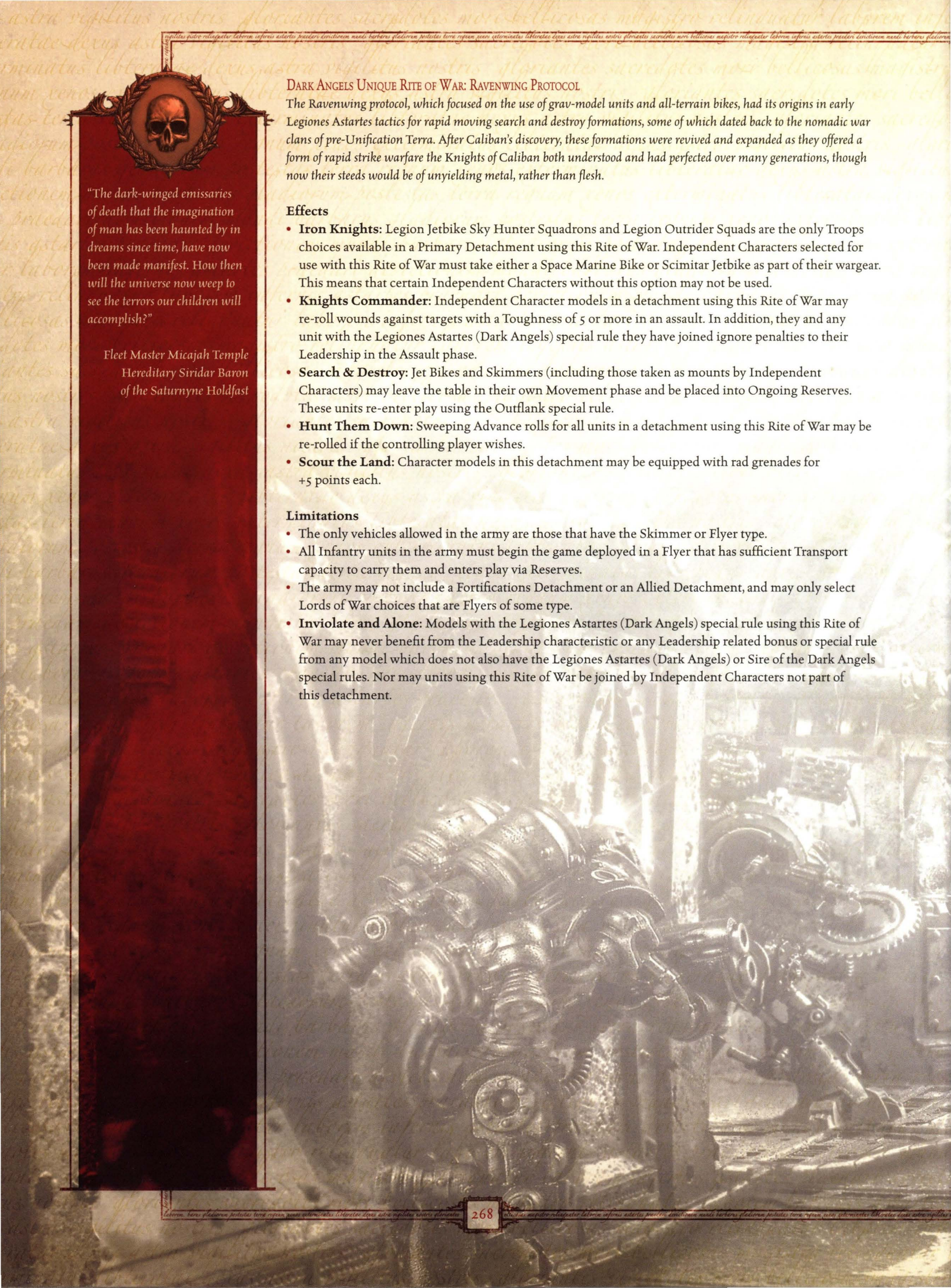
The Ravenwing protocol, which focused on the use of grav-model units and all-terrain bikes, had its origins in early Legiones Astartes tactics for rapid moving search and destroy formations, some of which dated back to the nomadic war clans of pre-Unification Terra. After Caliban's discovery, these formations were revived and expanded as they offered a form of rapid strike warfare the Knights of Caliban both understood and had perfected over many generations, though now their steeds would be of unyielding metal, rather than flesh.

Effects

- **Iron Knights:** Legion Jetbike Sky Hunter Squadrons and Legion Outrider Squads are the only Troops choices available in a Primary Detachment using this Rite of War. Independent Characters selected for use with this Rite of War must take either a Space Marine Bike or Scimitar Jetbike as part of their wargear. This means that certain Independent Characters without this option may not be used.
- **Knights Commander:** Independent Character models in a detachment using this Rite of War may re-roll wounds against targets with a Toughness of 5 or more in an assault. In addition, they and any unit with the Legiones Astartes (Dark Angels) special rule they have joined ignore penalties to their Leadership in the Assault phase.
- **Search & Destroy:** Jet Bikes and Skimmers (including those taken as mounts by Independent Characters) may leave the table in their own Movement phase and be placed into Ongoing Reserves. These units re-enter play using the Outflank special rule.
- **Hunt Them Down:** Sweeping Advance rolls for all units in a detachment using this Rite of War may be re-rolled if the controlling player wishes.
- **Scour the Land:** Character models in this detachment may be equipped with rad grenades for +5 points each.

Limitations

- The only vehicles allowed in the army are those that have the Skimmer or Flyer type.
- All Infantry units in the army must begin the game deployed in a Flyer that has sufficient Transport capacity to carry them and enters play via Reserves.
- The army may not include a Fortifications Detachment or an Allied Detachment, and may only select Lords of War choices that are Flyers of some type.
- **Inviolate and Alone:** Models with the Legiones Astartes (Dark Angels) special rule using this Rite of War may never benefit from the Leadership characteristic or any Leadership related bonus or special rule from any model which does not also have the Legiones Astartes (Dark Angels) or Sire of the Dark Angels special rules. Nor may units using this Rite of War be joined by Independent Characters not part of this detachment.



Dark Angels Unique Rite of War: Ironwing Protocol

The Ironwing Protocol was developed before the Great Crusade was fully born, when the first Space Marines were used by the Emperor to exterminate threats to Mankind too dire to be allowed to endanger the glorious future He had designed. Later variants of this protocol, which sought to wed the superhuman power of the Legiones Astartes and amplify that killing power with newly designed bespoke armoured units —such as the Land Raider— in close support, were entered into the Principia Belicosa for use and development by the Legions that would follow, notably the Xth and IVth, but the Dark Angels would continue to develop the tactical pattern to serve their own ends.

Effects

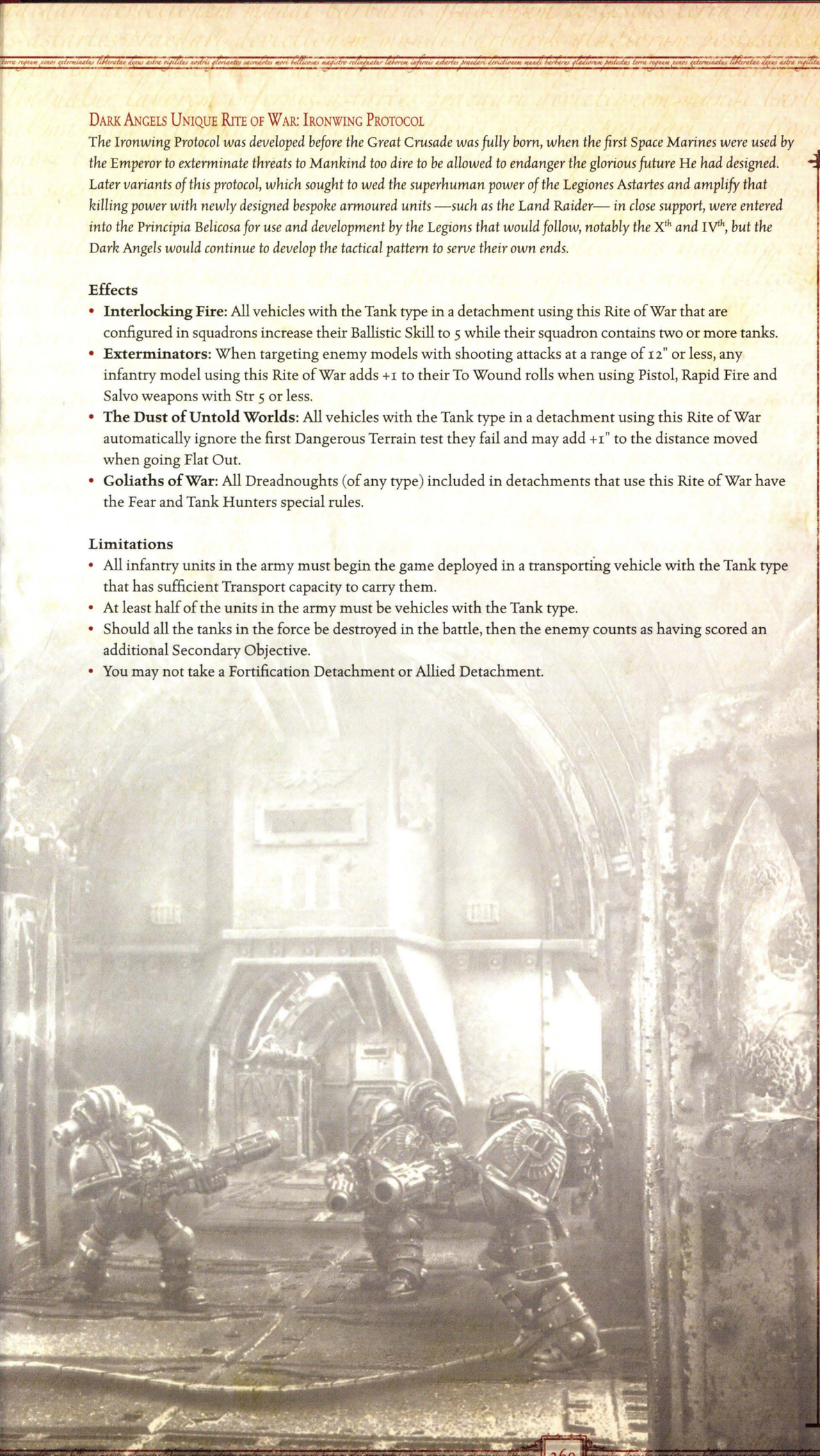
- **Interlocking Fire:** All vehicles with the Tank type in a detachment using this Rite of War that are configured in squadrons increase their Ballistic Skill to 5 while their squadron contains two or more tanks.
- **Exterminators:** When targeting enemy models with shooting attacks at a range of 12" or less, any infantry model using this Rite of War adds +1 to their To Wound rolls when using Pistol, Rapid Fire and Salvo weapons with Str 5 or less.
- **The Dust of Untold Worlds:** All vehicles with the Tank type in a detachment using this Rite of War automatically ignore the first Dangerous Terrain test they fail and may add +1" to the distance moved when going Flat Out.
- **Goliaths of War:** All Dreadnoughts (of any type) included in detachments that use this Rite of War have the Fear and Tank Hunters special rules.

Limitations

- All infantry units in the army must begin the game deployed in a transporting vehicle with the Tank type that has sufficient Transport capacity to carry them.
- At least half of the units in the army must be vehicles with the Tank type.
- Should all the tanks in the force be destroyed in the battle, then the enemy counts as having scored an additional Secondary Objective.
- You may not take a Fortification Detachment or Allied Detachment.

"Generals are not measured by the strength of their armies, nor warriors by their strength of arms. Behold, victory lies with those upon whose shoulders fate herself rests her hand."

Attrib. Narthan Dume,
Tyrant of the Panpacific Empire



Mechanicum Army List Additions

The following section details additional rules and units for playing games of Warhammer 40,000 set against the background of the dark and terrible wars of the Horus Heresy, and is intended to be used in conjunction with the army lists provided in previous Horus Heresy books.

HQ

The true history of Anacharis Scoria has been lost, but there exists fragmentary evidence that places him as a Magos Dominus in the service of Xana some thirty years before the outbreak of the wars of the Heresy. It is believed he was gifted the rank and duties of the Vodian Magister—the chief enforcer of cult doctrine on his shadowed and secretive world, but some time after that he was cast down and removed from all records until the time of the Loyalist covert operation known as the Xana Incursion. In the aftermath of that disaster, its existing rulers were destroyed in a bloody coup of which Scoria re-emerged far more powerful than before to slay those who had once judged him.

There is even tantalizing evidence that Scoria had been kept captive in the depths of the prison-forge of Xana-Tisiphone, his dark genius put to use despite being maimed and caged by the very Archmagos he once served. Furthermore, also that his release was an unintended consequence of the Imperial raid and that it was he, unleashed from bondage, who took command and hurled the Loyalist invaders off the planetoid.

If this is true, it is a dark irony indeed as it would be under the mastery of Scoria that Xana would become the first of the so-called Hell Forges that would blight the centuries to come.

Anacharis Scoria — 275 points

The Xanophane Tyrant, The Fallen Master, Lord of the Nine Cohorts, The Apostate Magister

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Anacharis Scoria	5	5	5	5	4	5	3	10	2+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- The Vodian Sceptre
- Two archaeotech pistols
- Cortex controller
- Machina protectiva‡
- Machinator array‡
- Cyber familiar‡

‡*See the Mechanicum book.*

Special Rules
- Adamantium Will
- Eternal Warrior
- Stubborn
- Battlesmith
- Cybertheurgy
- Patris Cybernetica
- Feel No Pain (5+)
- Independent Character
- Relentless
- The Rite of the Beast
- The Homonculex
- Warlord (if Anacharis Scoria is the army's Warlord, he has the Forbidden Protocols Trait rather than rolling randomly)

Options
- Anacharis Scoria may be mounted on an:
  - Xanathite Abeyant ..... +40 points

Special Rules

Patris Cybernetica

A character with this special rule may join a unit of Monstrous Creatures so long as they have the Cybernetica Cortex special rule, even though this would not usually be allowed. While it is part of a unit of Monstrous Creatures, a model with this special rule may not Go To Ground, voluntarily or otherwise, and enemy shooting at the unit may opt to ignore the fact that the character is the closest model in the unit for the purposes of shooting attacks if they wish and instead target the closest Monstrous Creature in the unit, if they have attacks in range.

The Vodian Sceptre

A unique archaeotech weapon, this singular device also serves as the seal of office of the Magisterium of the Vodian Consistory, the chief enforcer of the ruling magos of the Forge World of Xana II. Made from materials found to be all but indestructible, the staff may be used to parry blows from the most powerful of weapons as well as strike with appallingly destructive power thanks to unknown technologies concealed within it which seemingly create entropic fields that cause matter to break apart in seconds as if tens of millennia had passed.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Vodian sceptre	-	*	2	Melee, Two-handed, Entropic Destroyer

Entropic Destroyer*: Any successful hit with this weapon inflicts D3 wounds automatically on the targeted unit or model, or in the case of a target with an Armour value, a single Hull Point is lost per hit.

Invulnerable saves may be taken as normal against these wounds but Feel No Pain or It Will Not Die rolls may not.

The Rite of the Beast

Anacharis Scoria's mastery of Cybertheurgy went well beyond what was permissible to the doctrine of the Martian Omnissian Cult, or indeed the pronouncements of the Imperium, and enabled him through unknown means to imbue a preternatural animalism into the Cybernetica under him in combat, driving them into a maddened frenzy like tortured beasts when he willed it so.

The Rite of the Beast is an additional Cybertheurgic power (see page 280) which only he may use. The power has a modifier to use of -2. If successfully applied, it affects an entire unit of models rather than just a single model. All models in the unit may re-roll failed hits in assault and add +1 to their Initiative, move and charge distances for the duration of the power. However, after the power has expended normally, roll a D6 for each surviving model in the unit. On the roll of a 1, the model suffers a wound with no save of any kind possible.

The Homonculex

In addition to the other Battle-automata in his detachment, a single Arlatax Battle-automata, called the Homonculex, may be purchased at the standard cost and is able to take the standard listed upgrades (see page 274). This represents a test bed for Scoria's arts and experiments. As well as being subject to the Forbidden Protocols Trait rules that follow, this Arlatax has the Paragon of Metal and Rage special rules at no points cost, but if Anacharis Scoria is slain, this model is also immediately removed from play and counts as destroyed.

Warlord: Forbidden Protocols

Scoria's sins against the Machine Cult's doctrine were many, and he became one of the founding fathers of what in later ages would become known as the Dark Mechanicum. Long before the Horus Heresy, he had through discovery and experimentation begun to create certain programming protocols whose geometry extended beyond Euclidean space into realms best left untouched. As a result, those automata under his command behaved not even as machine-creatures but true predators, seemingly imbued with an èternal hunger for bloodshed and destruction without logic or restraint. They were in fact the first glimmerings of far more terrible things to come, but even his early works were to see him cast down for his blasphemies.

If Anacharis Scoria is your army's Warlord then all cybernetica cortex-equipped models in the same detachment as him have the following special rules applied to them:

- They may make Sweeping Advance and Run moves contrary to the normal rules for such units.
- If outside the cortex controller range of a model from the same detachment, the model/unit must move towards the nearest enemy unit (other than Flyers) in the Movement phase and must make charges and Sweeping Advance moves if they are able to do so. This rule does not apply to models that have been given the Paragon of Metal special rule.

Xanathite Abeyant

This unique system grants him the following when equipped: +1 Wound, +1 Attack, Move Through Cover, Very Bulky, Hardened Armour, It Will Not Die and a photon thruster which can be fired in addition to his usual shooting attacks.

Using Anacharis Scoria in your games: Anacharis Scoria is an Archmagos Dominus and can be used as a HQ choice in both Taghmata Omnissiah and Legio Cybernetica armies. If included as part of the army's Primary Detachment, he must be the army's Warlord. He may not be used as part of a Loyalist allied force.

Arlatax Class Battle-automata Maniple

175 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Arlatax	4	3	7	6	4	4	3†	8	3+

Unit Composition
- 1 Arlatax class Battle-automata

Unit Type
- Jump Pack Monstrous Creature

Wargear
- Atomantic shielding‡
- Two Arlatax pattern power claws
- Plasma blaster
- Frag grenades

Special Rules
- Cybernetica Cortex‡
- Reactor Blast‡
- Feel No Pain (6+)

† Includes bonus attack for two close combat weapons
‡See the Mechanicum Taghmata Army List book

Options
- The maniple may include up to:
  - Two additional Arlatax class Battle-automata..... +175 points each
- Any Arlatax may replace one of its power claws with an:
  - Arc Scourge*.....+10 points

**If this is done, it must decide which it is using to make its attacks with in any Assault phase.*

Special Option
- A single maniple comprised solely of a single Battle-automata/ Siege-automata (of any type) in the detachment may be given:
  - The Paragon of Metal special rule.....+35 points

Arlatax Power Claw
The long-bladed power claws of the Arlatax crackle with murderous energies and incorporate inside their arm-housing a compact, light autocannon which the Battle-automata may use to deadly effect against enemy infantry.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Arlatax power claw	-	+2	2	Melee, Shred
Inbuilt cannon	24"	6	4	Assault 3

Arc Scourge
A powerful lash-like weapon equipped with a multi-spectrum disruption field, the arc scourge may be used to strike multiple foes at once or coil round an enemy war machine and deliver a pulse that will incinerate and overload its systems.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Arc scourge	-	User	2	Melee, Rampage, Armourbane, Concussion

FAST ATTACK

A variant of the ancient and versatile Conqueror automata STC, the Arlatax's development, which was the work of the magos-wrights of Xana, would do much to influence the later design of the Domitar, though beyond the Taghmata and scutarii forces of that Forge World the pattern never gained wide acceptance, despite its excellent performance as a rapid-moving shock assault unit. There were some who blamed the idiosyncratic choice of certain components in the Battle-automata's designs for this, which were not approved by the remit of Mars, making refit and repair difficult for those without a direct line to Xana's resources, although certain outlying Forge Worlds such as Atar-Merdian and Incaladion were known to have obtained full templates to produce their own independently. Darker suspicions focused on their machine-spirits, which were particularly prone to greater than tolerable incidences of Malifica without obvious cause. As the Horus Heresy ground on however, it became clear that Xana had produced and stockpiled the Arlatax in unsuspected numbers, and in increasingly baroque and sinister sub-patterns, for a price. Meanwhile Atar-Meridian maintained a smaller stream that saw more heavily sanctified variants take their own place on the Loyalist battlelines.

Macrocarid Explorator

195 points

	Armour				
	BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
Macrocarid Explorator	4	14	14	14	4

Unit Composition
- 1 Macrocarid Explorator

Unit Type
- Vehicle (Tank, Transport)

Wargear
- Hull-mounted mauler bolt cannon
- Two sponson-mounted lascannon
- Machine spirit
- Extra armour
- Augury scanner
- Searchlight
- Smoke launchers
- Blessed autosimulacra

Transport Capacity
- A Macrocarid Explorator has a Transport capacity of 10 models.

Access Points
- A Macrocarid Explorator has two access doors, one on either side.

Options
- A Macrocarid Explorator may upgrade its hull-mounted mauler bolt cannon for one of the following:
  - Volkite culverin ..... Free
  - Multi-melta ..... Free
  - Twin-linked phased plasma-fusil ..... +10 points
  - Twin-linked rad cleanser ..... +10 points
  - Lascannon ..... +5 points
  - Conversion beamer ..... +15 points
  - Graviton imploder ..... +15 points
- A Macrocarid Explorator may exchange its two sponson-mounted lascannon for one of the following:
  - Two twin-linked mauler bolt cannon ..... Free
  - Two twin-linked lascannon ..... +20 points
  - Two irradiation engines ..... +40 points
- A Macrocarid Explorator may take any of the following:
  - Hunter-killer missile ..... +5 points
  - Dozer blade ..... +5 points
  - Auxiliary drive ..... +10 points
  - Anbaric claw ..... +10 points
  - Armoured ceramite ..... +20 points
  - Flare shield ..... +25 points
  - Explorator Augury Web* ..... +50 points
  - Servo-rig ..... +20 points

**If this option is selected, the Macrocarid Explorator's Transport capacity drops to eight models.*

Explorator Augury Web
A vehicle with an Explorator Augury Web gains the Scout special rule. While it is on the table, at the start of any of the controlling player's turn, before any Reserve rolls are made, they may declare that the vehicle' auguries are being used in Disruption or Relay modes, their effect lasting until their next player turn.
- **Disruption Mode:** The opposing force suffers -1 to their Reserve rolls.
- **Relay Mode:** The owning player's Reserve rolls may be re-rolled (whether failed or successful!) if they wish.

Note that the presence of multiple Explorator Augury Web-equipped vehicles have no additional effect and only one mode may be chosen a turn. If a vehicle is fitted with an Explorator Augury Web, its Transport capacity is reduced to 8.

Servo-rig
A servo-rig enables a single model transported within to use their Battlesmith special rule on models within 3" of the vehicle's hull while on board. No bonuses to their Battlesmith roll for extra equipment or assistance by servo-automata, etc, apply to this. Also, the servo-rig allows the vehicle to make a special attack in the Shooting phase against a single enemy unit within 3". This attack need not target the same unit as the vehicle's other weapons.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Servo-rig	3"	8	2	Heavy 1

HEAVY SUPPORT

The Macrocarids are a broad classification of heavy armoured and fully environmentally sealed vehicles used as frontline combat, mobile command and exploration vehicles by the magos of the Mechanicum when travailing into hostile or unknown territories.

In the details of their structure and equipment, no two Macrocarids are exactly the same, having been repeatedly redesigned and modified by their masters to suit a particular mission, sphere of operations or doctrinal eccentricity. In the Great Crusade's earlier years, the magos accompanying the frontline expansion were wont to use the ubiquitous Proteus pattern Land Raider as a robust and sacred template for their Macrocarids, but as the Imperium expanded and the domains and acquired lore of the Mechanicum expanded with it, wholly unique hulls became more common, as well as the particular designs and patterns originating from the fanes of independent Forge Worlds beyond the firm writ of Mars.

LORDS OF WAR

The fabled macro engines of the Centurio Ordinatus are rare and truly arcane weapons systems of staggering power, that range from the unique and colossal Ordinatus Primaris, such as the Mars and Endymion, to the lesser but still gargantuan Ordinatus Minoris, such as the Ulator, Sagittar and the Urkallac classes, which remain nevertheless some of the most potent war machines at the Imperium's disposal.

Though they were not entirely unique, one-of-a-kind war machines such as the Ordinatus Primaris, the Minoris macro engines were still rarer yet than even the Battle Titans of the Legio Titanica, and only a handful of Forge Worlds had the resources or indeed the doctrinal blessing and religious authority to produce or maintain such embodiments of the Omnissiah's divine wrath.

Such was the sacredness of these machines above all others, that an entire sub-cult of the Mechanicum was devoted to their worship and propitiation, and even the savants whose entire lives were devoted to this task seldom fully understood them, even the acolytes of the Machine God who tended to them.

Ordinatus-Minoris Macro Engine

Ordinatus Sagittar — 700 points
Ordinatus Ulator — 1,075 points

		Armour			
	BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
Ordinatus Sagittar	4	14	13	13	14
Ordinatus Ulator	4	14	13	13	14

Unit Composition
- One Ordinatus-Minoris

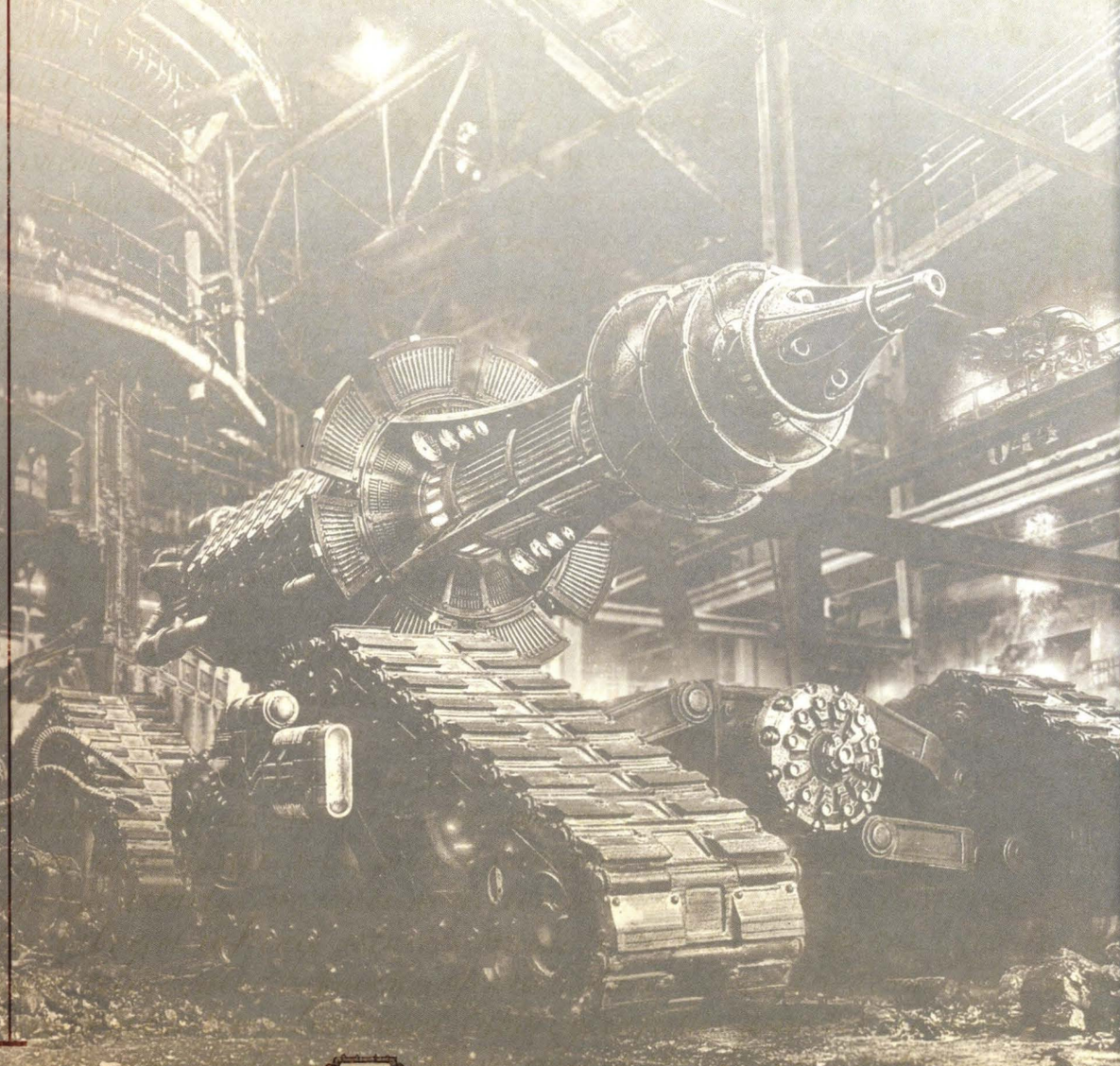
Unit Type
- Vehicle (Super-heavy)

Wargear (Both)
- Three turret-mounted volkite culverins
- Blessed autosimulacra
- Anabaric claw
- Ordinatus dispersion shield
- Armoured ceramite

Wargear (Sagittar)
- One Belicosa pattern volcano cannon

Wargear (Ulator)
- One Ulator class sonic destructor

Special Rules
- Ordinatus Reactor Meltdown
- Reinforced Structure



Special Rules

Ordinatus Reactor Meltdown

The potent onboard plasma reactor of the Ordinatus ensures that should this war engine be destroyed, its fiery demise will immolate a sizable proportion of the battlefield on which it fights. Because of this, instead of using the normal Catastrophic Damage table for Super-heavy vehicles, use the table presented here instead. Note as well that in the cases of the Explosion and Devastating Explosion results, the Ordinatus model remains on the table as impassable terrain after it is destroyed. The radius effect of the Ordinatus explosion does not use the usual Apocalyptic Mega-Blast marker either. Instead, measure distances from the hull of the model as a starting point with the blast ranges of 6"/12"/24" respectively.

D6	Result	Str	AP
1-2	Explosion	D/8/4	2/3/5
3-5	Devastating Explosion	D/9/5	2/3/4
6	Titanic Explosion	D/10/6	1/2/4

Reinforced Structure

The Ordinatus has an invulnerable save of 6+.

Belicosa Pattern Volcano Cannon

An ancient pattern of weapon whose destructive power is comparable to many shipboard cannon and planetary defence lasers, few mobile weapons platforms are capable of mounting the Belicosa simply due to its savage power requirements, as well as the danger of the thermal and radiation overspill of its firing. Only the Ordinatus Minoris and the most powerful Battle Titans, such as the Warlord, are ordained to bear such a weapon by the Mechanicum, and before their power, the strongest fortress walls may be reduced to glowing embers and the most resilient armour to molten slag and vapour.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Belicosa volcano cannon	180"	D	1	Primary Weapon 1, Apocalyptic Blast (10"), Machine Destroyer

Ulator Class Sonic Destructor

A terrifying weapon whose origins lie in the shadows of the Age of Strife, these devices, though inferior copies of the unique armament of the great Primus Ordinatus Mars, still operate on an order of magnitude far beyond anything mounted even on the largest super-heavy tank found in the Imperium's common arsenal. Using a plasma reactor akin to those found on Battle Titans to power a directional sonic transduction generator of staggering force, it emits a varying waveform of destructive sound energy able to shatter the most resilient materials. The annihilating wave-pulse traverses the battlefield wreaking havoc in its path, the particular effect of its design meaning that the larger the target struck, the more damaging the wave's impact.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Ulator class sonic destructor	72"	X*	2	Primary Weapon 1, Ulator Sonic Wave, Pinning, Armourbane, Instant Death, Ignores Cover

See Sonic Wave table below.

Ulator Sonic Wave: When firing the weapon, place the Massive Blast (7") marker so that its edge is touching some part of the firing model's forward hull. Then move the template in a direct line away from the model, travelling in any direction within the weapon's 45 degree forward firing arc until its maximum range is reached or the template leaves the table. All models the template passes over at least partially suffer a single automatic hit. In the case of units of multiple models, the unit suffers a number of automatic hits equal to the number of models the template has contacted, casualties being chosen by the controlling player of the affected unit. Flyers and Flying Creatures are also struck if the template passes over their base.

Note: The weapon may still be fired even if friendly models are caught in its area of effect, and the weapon's fire may strike units along the path of the blast to which it may not itself have line of sight or be eligible to target. However, the first unit targeted by the weapon must be an enemy model or the weapon may not be fired.

The strength of the weapon's hit is determined by the type of model it strikes, as listed on the following table:

Sonic Wave Table

Unit Type	Strength
Infantry†	5
†(including Jump Pack and Jet Pack Infantry)	
Bikes, Jetbikes, Beasts, Cavalry	5
Monstrous Creatures, Vehicles	8
Vehicles with the Tank type	10
Super-heavy vehicles (all types)	D
Gargantuan Creatures (all types)	D
Buildings and fortifications	D

Ordinatus Dispersion Shield

An arcane and obscure hybrid of both void shield and flare shield technologies, the powerful dispersion shields mounted on Ordinatus class vehicles are designed to make them all but impervious to counter-battery fire. However, such is the strain the field creates on the vehicle's generators that its protection degrades over time as its elements begin to burn out.

The protection provided by the dispersion shield affects only shooting attacks originating from its front and side arcs, and against barrage weapons from any arc.

- On the first turn that the Ordinatus is in play, the strength of shooting attacks and the roll result on the Destroyer table made against it are at -3.
- On the second turn the Ordinatus is in play, the strength of shooting attacks and the roll result on the Destroyer table made against it are at -2.
- On the third and subsequent turns the Ordinatus is in play, the strength of shooting attacks and the roll result on the Destroyer table made against it are at -1.

Mechanicum Cerastus Knight-Atrapos

435 points

	Armour								
	WS	BS	S	Front	Side	Rear	I	A	HP
Cerastus Knight-Atrapos	4	4	10	13	12	12	4	4	7

Unit Composition
- 1 Cerastus Knight-Atrapos

Unit Type
- Vehicle (Super-heavy Walker)

Wargear
- One graviton singularity cannon
- One Atrapos lascutter
- Ionic flare shield
- Blessed autosimulcra

Special Rules
- Flank Speed
- Household Rank (when included in a Questoris Knight Crusade army only)
- (Super-heavy Walker) Fear, Hammer of Wrath, Invincible Behemoth, Move Through Cover, Relentless, Smash and Strikedown
- Catastrophic Destruction
- Macro-extinction Targeting Protocols

Options
- The Cerastus Knight-Atrapos may be upgraded with:
  - Occular augmetics ..... +10 points

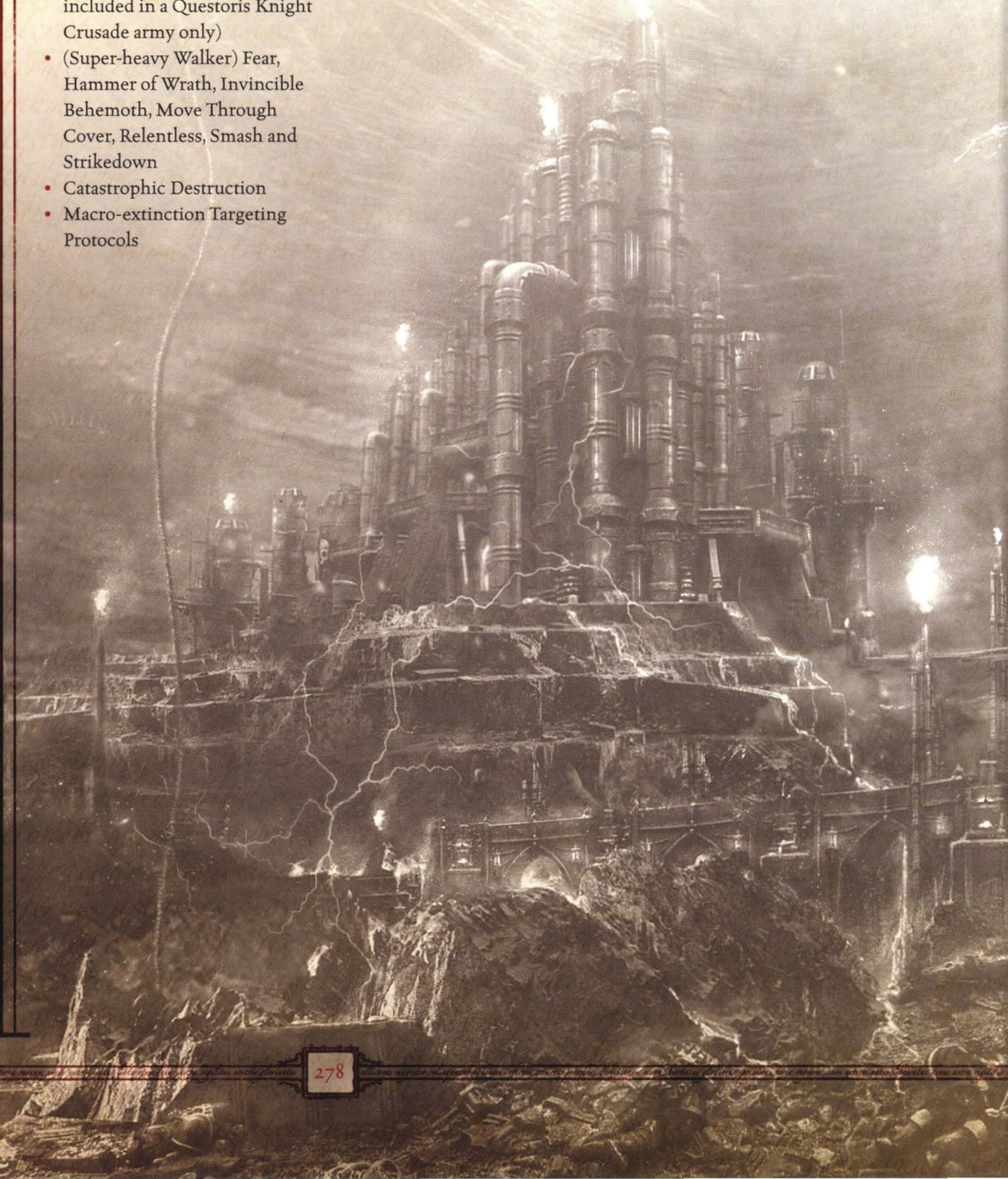
The Mechanicum Knight-Atrapos may be used either as part of a Mechanicum Taghmata army as a Lords of War choice as normal, or as part of a Questoris Knight Crusade army as a 0-1 choice per 2,000 points in the army.

LORDS OF WAR

One of the rarest and most potent Knights, created solely under the direct auspices of the Lords Magos of the Mechanicum, the Atrapos is a unique variant of the Cerastus. The Atrapos was created, it is said, during the early Great Crusade to carry particularly rare and powerful weaponry and with a single goal in mind – the destruction of heretek engines and xenos war machines whose very nature and existence was considered a blasphemy to the Omnissiah.

Its use is normally confined to the direct authority of the Synod of Magos of a given Forge World, their power used both in dire warfare against the enemies of the Omnissiah and also held as an ultimate sanction against any wayward magos or forge-fane that would succumb to heresy against the edicts of the Machine Cult. It is rare, but not unknown for a Knight-Atrapos to be gifted into the charge of a Knight House outside the direct influence of a Forge World, marking payment of some great service or blood-debt between the two.

In the legendry of the Knight Houses, the machine spirits of the Knight-Atrapos are said to carry with them a cold and all-destroying hunger, and for the scion who bonds with them, madness is said to be a constant risk.



Flank Speed
If the Cerastus Knight-Atrapos opts to make a Run move rather than firing a weapon in the Shooting phase, it may move 3D6".

Ionic Flare Shield
When a Cerastus Knight-Atrapos is deployed, and subsequently at the start of each of the opposing side's Shooting phases, the Cerastus Knight-Atrapos' controlling player must declare which facing each Cerastus Knight-Atrapos' ion flare shield is covering. The choices are front, left side, right side or rear.

The Knight has a 4+ invulnerable save against all hits against the shield facing and the strength of any Shooting attack against the shield facing is reduced by -1, the effect increasing to -2 if the weapon has the Blast or Template special rules (note however that this strength reduction has no effect on Destroyer or Haywire attacks). Ionic flare shields are repositioned before any attacks are carried out in the Shooting phase and may not be used to make saving throws against close combat attacks.

Macro-extinction Targeting Protocols
When making shooting attacks against targets of the Super-heavy or Gargantuan Creature type, the Cerastus Knight-Atrapos counts its weapons as Twin-linked.

Catastrophic Destruction
When destroyed, the Cerastus Knight-Atrapos adds +2 to the result rolled on the Catastrophic Damage table.

Cerastus Knight-Atrapos Weapons

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Atrapos lascutter				
(beam)	8"	D	2	Heavy 1
(close combat)	-	D	1	Melee, Wrecker
Graviton singularity cannon	36"	8	2	Heavy 1, Large Blast (5"), Armourbane, Concussive, Collapsing Singularity

Wrecker: Weapons and attacks with this special rule may re-roll failed Armour Penetration rolls against fortifications and immobile structures (such as bunkers and barricades), and add +1 to any result rolled on the Building Damage chart. If this attack damages a bulkhead or wall section of terrain and destroys it, remove that section of terrain from play if possible.

Collapsing Singularity: Before firing the weapon, roll a D6. On a 1, the firing Knight-Atrapos suffers a single Hull Point of damage with no saves of any kind before the attack is carried out. On a result of a 6, the attack is carried out with the Vortex special rule.

"The beast of metal endures longer then the flesh of men. Those who tend the beast of metal must labour long to learn its ways, for a single beast must suffer the mastership of many men until ready to shed its last vorpal coils."

Introit to Runic Mechanics

Cybertheurgy

Note: *The following rules are an updated version of those that have appeared in previous volumes in Forge World's Horus Heresy series.*

The Magos Dominus of the Legio Cybernetica are privy to many ancient secrets from the Dark Age of Technology, a time when the un-living phalanxes of Mankind's creations shattered forgotten alien empires to carve humanity's first empire from the stars. Although much of this lore has been lost or become expressly forbidden, such fragments of knowledge allow the magos to fashion and maintain a small, but powerful, cadre of battle-automata for the Imperium. Such is the nature of the dark arcana of Cybertheurgy; however, it is not without its risks, as what is awakened may slip the leash of its master's control with disastrous consequences.

Using Cybertheurgy

- A model with the Cybertheurgy special rule may use a single power in the Shooting phase instead of making a shooting attack, and may not do so if they are engaged in an assault or Falling Back.
- One power effect may be selected from the list that follows each time Cybertheurgy is used and, unless specified in the power, a single model from the same detachment with a Cybernetica Cortex within 12" (or 24" in a Legio Cybernetica Battle Cohort) must be selected as the target of the power's effect. Note that no line of sight is required and the power may be used on a model already in an assault.
- Unless noted, the effect lasts until the start of the Shooting phase of the detachment's subsequent turn.
- Place a suitable marker next to the affected Battle-automata for the duration of the power to indicate its effect.

Activating a Power

- In order to use a power, the Cybertheurgist must successfully pass a Leadership test. If the test is passed, the power takes effect. If the test is failed, the power does not take effect.
- Depending on the strength and difficulty of the power, a penalty may be imposed on the Ld value of the model making the test (this is applied always to the characteristic value being tested, not the dice result).
- If a Cybertheurgy test is failed and a result of a 12 (a double '6') is rolled, the power has both failed and gone awry. If this occurs, roll immediately on the Cybertheurgy Mishap table (see page 281).

Cybertheurgy Mishap Table

Should a model be the subject of a Cybertheurgy Mishap, roll on the following table and immediately apply the result to the targeted model.

D6	Effect
1-3	**Signal Corruption:** The model may only fire Snap Shots and fights with Weapon Skill 1 in assaults for the next Game Turn.
4-5	**Corrosive Paradox:** The model suffers a single automatic wound with no saves of any kind possible.
6	**Malifica:** The machine-spirit rebels and the model gains spiteful self-awareness. The Battle-automata is now destroyed for the purpose of Victory points if relevant and is no longer part of the controlling player's force. If part of a unit, the Battle-automata is split from that unit and placed out of coherency with it. The Battle-automata is still used in the previously controlling player's turn, but will from now on move towards and shoot at the closest unit each turn and then assault that same unit if able. Both sides may now target the Battle-automata if they desire.

The Powers of Cybertheurgy

Note: In the following powers, a model referred to as the 'chosen' model, must be a model with a Cybernetica Cortex which is part of the same detachment unless otherwise noted.

- **Rite of Celerity** ..... **Modifier: None**

The chosen model gains +2 to its Initiative score for the duration of the power's effect.

- **Rite of Eternity** ..... **Modifier: None**

The chosen model immediately regains one Wound it had lost previously in the game.

- **Rite of Fury** ..... **Modifier: -1**

The chosen model gains +2 to its Attacks characteristic for the duration of the power's effect.

- **Rite of Destruction** ..... **Modifier: -1**

The chosen model may immediately fire twice with its Shooting weapons against a single target unit as its shooting attack. However, if this power is successful, the affected model may not use its ranged weapons again until after its subsequent Shooting phase. This includes Overwatch fire.

- **Rite of Dread Castigation** ..... **Modifier: -2**

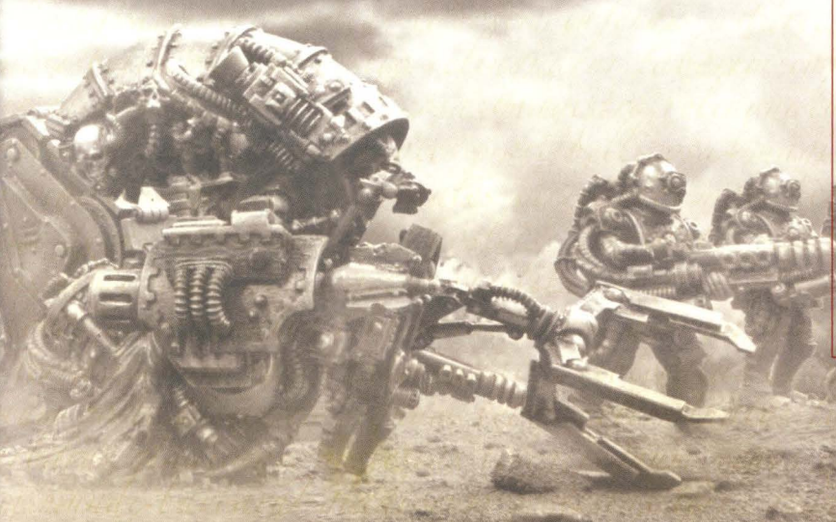
Unlike the other listed powers, this ability may only be used against an enemy model with the Cybernetica Cortex special rule within range and represents a form of attack rather than augmentation. If the power is successfully used, both the Cybertheurgist's player and the controlling player of the model targeted each roll a D6 and add the Leadership value of the Cybertheurgist in the case of the attacking player, and the target model in the case of the defending player. The target model suffers one automatic wound with no saves of any kind possible for each point that the attacker's total score exceeds that of the defender's total score.

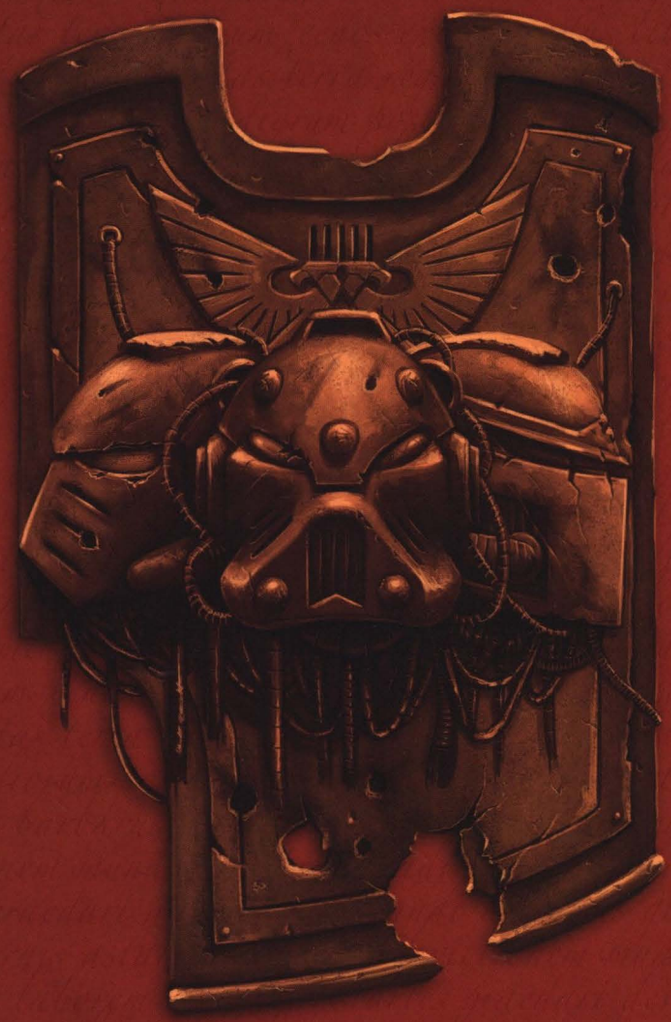
If an attempt at the Rite of Dread Castigation incurs a roll on the Cybertheurgy Mishap table, the Corrosive Paradox result occurs automatically, except that it is the Cybertheurgist, not the target model, that suffers the damage.

- **Rite of Immolation** ..... **Modifier: -3**

By overcoming the safety protocols and self-preservation systems of the automata's reactor core, the Cybertheurgist forces the machine creature to catastrophically self-destruct. If the power is used successfully, the model is destroyed, immediately removed from play and replaced by a Large Blast (5") marker. All models under the marker suffer a hit with a Strength value equivalent to the affected model's Toughness and an AP value equal to the affected model's armour save.

Should a failed attempt at Rite of Immolation result in a Cybertheurgy Mishap, the Malifica result occurs automatically and there is no need to roll on the table.





Battles in the Age of Darkness Core Missions

The following six missions represent the clash and counter-clash of the bitter civil war of the Horus Heresy.

Victory Conditions
In all cases, in addition to the listed victory conditions for any particular Battles in the Age of Darkness mission, completely destroying the enemy force is always a victory. If at the end of the Game Turn, unless specified by the mission, a side has no models on the table, their opponent has won.

Selecting a Mission
Having selected your armies for fighting the battle, determine which Age of Darkness mission you will be playing. This may be done either by mutual agreement or by randomly rolling for the mission on the following table:

Mission Table

D6	Mission
1	Blood Feud
2	Onslaught
3	Shatter Strike
4	Dominion
5	Tide of Carnage
6	War of Lies

Placing Terrain
After you have determined what mission you are playing, you must then place terrain from your collection to set up the battlefield. Terrain may be placed by the simple expedient of each player taking turns to place an individual piece or so that they form an attractive battlefield, and can be themed in 'sets' (a power generator and industrial buildings, etc) or simply placed roughly evenly across the table and then randomised via the use of a Scatter dice and 2D6. For ease of play, try to leave a gap of at least 2" between each discreet area of terrain to allow the clear passage of infantry models.

Depending on which mission you are fighting, this may also have specific instructions on the terrain and its set-up. In addition, if you are playing through a particular campaign, you may have a particular style of terrain or special rules you can use to further theme your battlefield (such as the Isstvan III battlefield terrain rules found in *The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal*).

Determine Deployment Map
After the terrain has been set up, you must determine each player's deployment zones.

First the deployment map is determined. This may be done either by mutual agreement or by randomly rolling on the deployment map table found below.

Once the deployment map has been decided on, the players should roll off. The winner of the roll-off selects one of the deployment zones to be theirs, and their opponent then takes the opposite deployment zone.

Deployment Map Table

D6	Deployment Map Type
1	Clash of the Line
2	Dawn of War
3	Search and Destroy
4	Hammer and Anvil
5	Ambush!
6	Vanguard Strike

The Heresy-era Battlefield
Remember that for an enjoyable game, where neither close combat or ranged units will over-dominate, it is recommended that a mixture of terrain, some able to block line of sight for large vehicles (such as rocky crags, industrial machinery, ruins and buildings) and some providing cover mainly to infantry (such as craters, woods, jungle, swamps, debris fields, hills and wreckage), is used.

When put together, this terrain should have a sufficient footprint to cover between a quarter and a third of the surface of the playing area. A good rule of thumb here is five or six larger pieces of scenery (roughly 12" x 12" each) as well as three to six pieces of smaller 'scatter terrain', which can comprise a mixture of pieces roughly 6" x 6" or of larger miniatures bases made up as terrain, such as stacks of barrels, containers, sinkholes, small craters, small vehicles, scrap piles, etc.

Deployment Maps

1. Clash of the Line

Clash of the Line has two opposing arrowhead-shaped deployment zones. When deploying in either of these zones, no unit can be deployed within 12" of the centre of the table during standard deployment.

The player's own table edge is the narrow edge which forms the rear of their 'arrowhead'.

2. Dawn of War

If players are using the Dawn of War deployment map, the board is divided into two equal halves across its length.

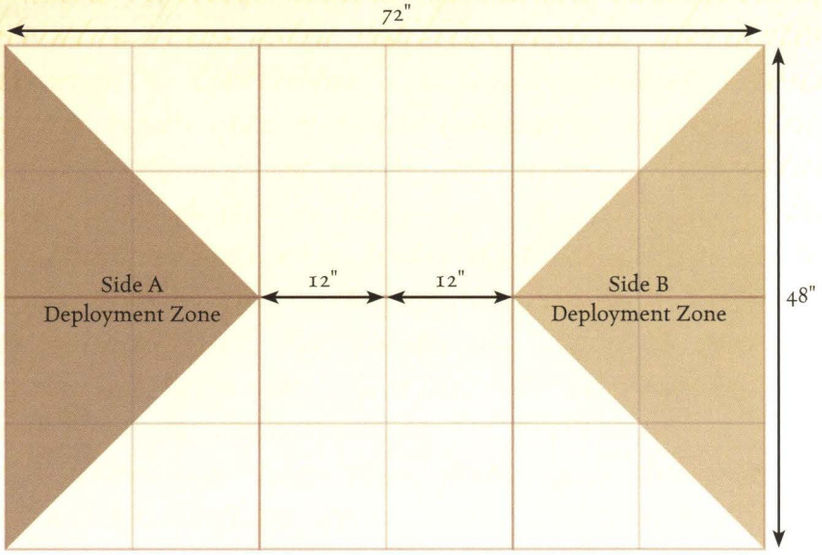
For Dawn of War battles, a player's table edge is the long table edge touching their own deployment zone.

3. Search and Destroy

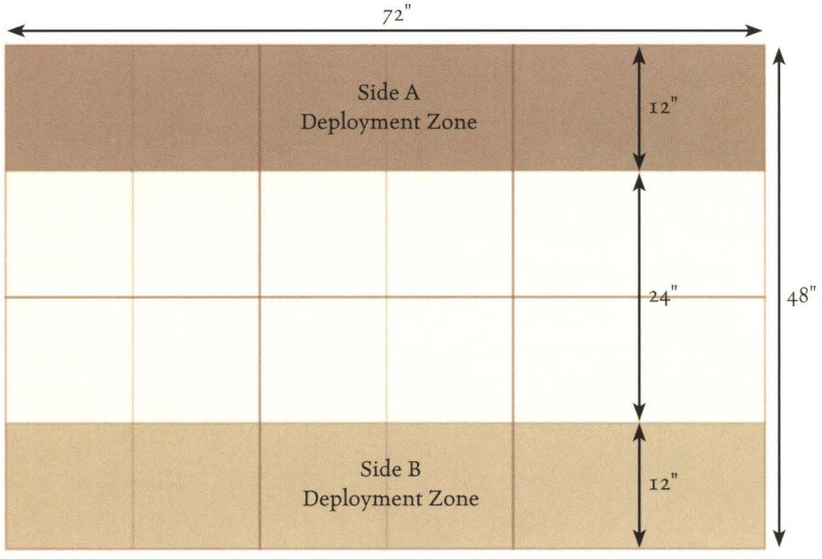
The Search and Destroy deployment map divides the table into four equal quarters. Each quarter constitutes a deployment zone. Units may not be deployed into the circular 18" diameter area at the centre of the table.

A player's table edges are any which form part of their deployment area.

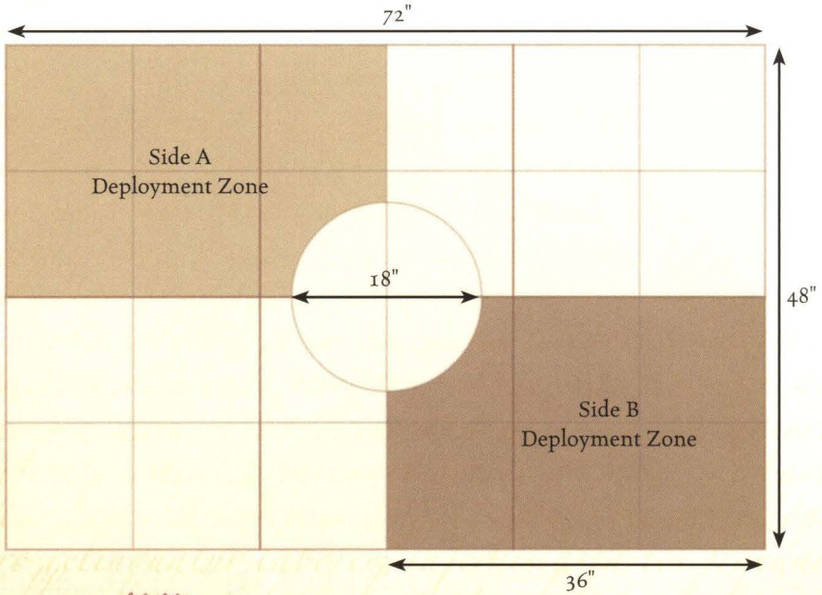
Clash of the Line



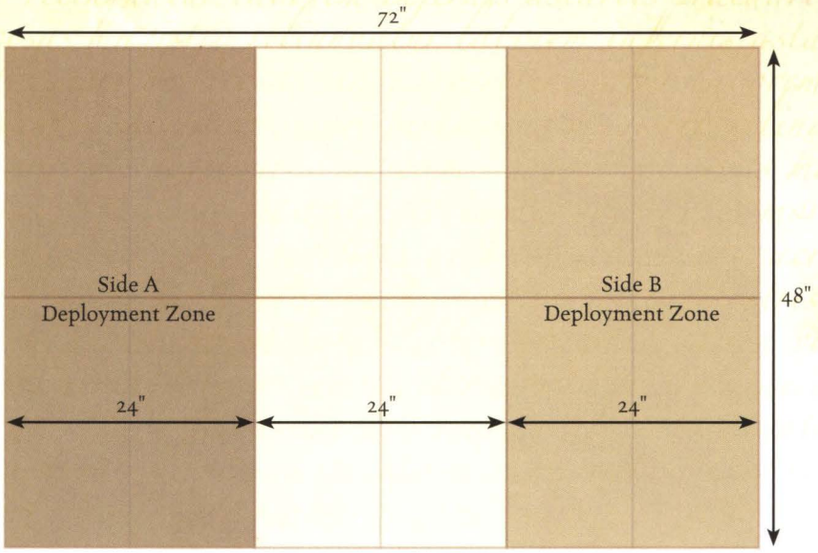
Dawn of War



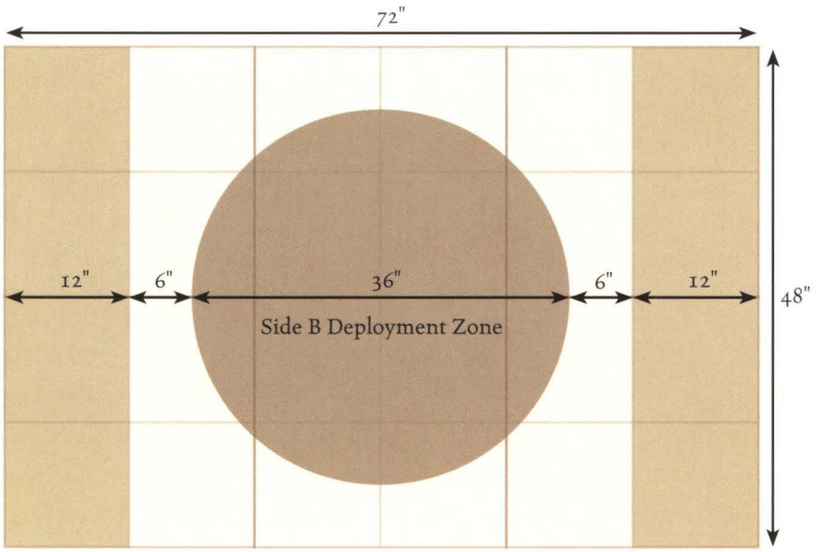
Search and Destroy



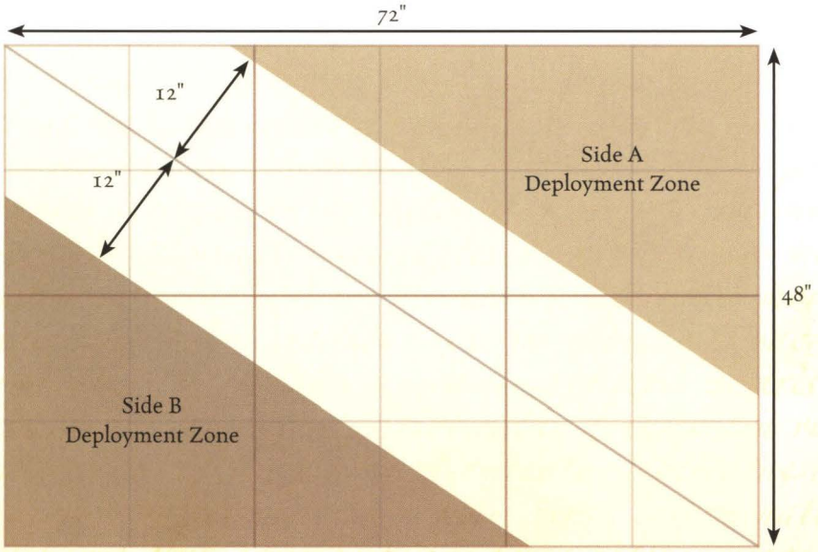
HAMMER AND ANVIL



AMBUSH!



VANGUARD STRIKE



4. Hammer and Anvil
If players are using the Hammer and Anvil deployment map, the table is divided into two equal halves across its width.

For Hammer and Anvil battles, a player's table edge is the short table edge touching their own deployment zone.

5. Ambush!
The Ambush! deployment map divides the table into three areas: a central defender's area (representing the force being ambushed) and two deployment areas on the narrow table edges which are both available to the opposing player, representing the 'attacking' forces that have set up the ambush.

The player winning the roll-off may opt to take the part of the Attacker or the Defender, and their opponent then takes the opposing deployment type.

The narrow table edges are the Attacking player's, while the long table edges are the Defending player's (with any of the Defender's Reserves entering by the long edges, representing reinforcements rushing to relieve the ambushed force).

6. Vanguard Strike
If using the Vanguard Strike deployment map, the board is divided into two equal halves across its diagonal. The players then agree which diagonal deployment zone each will play or can instead randomise to decide.

For Vanguard Strike battles, a player's table edge is the long table edge that touches their own deployment zone.

Mission 1 – Blood Feud

"Blood will have Blood, Sorrow piles upon Sorrow, Vengeance breeds Vengeance."

Ancient Terran Proverb

The Armies

Choose the armies using the Battles in the Age of Darkness rules and Force Organisation charts.

Setting up the Game

- Determine the deployment map.
- Set up terrain for the battlefield.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.

Deployment

- Roll off. The winner may choose to deploy first or second.
- The player who deploys first selects their deployment zone and then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- The player who is deploying second then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units placed in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- Rules for deploying into fortifications, Infiltrators, Scouts and Transport vehicles, etc, are as found in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.
- Each player should determine their Blood Feud target (see the Victory Conditions section).

First Turn

The player who deployed first also has the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Game Length

This mission lasts for six turns.

Victory Conditions

This mission's victory conditions are achieved by the destruction of the enemy's fighting strength, with a particular strategic target in mind whose loss will cripple their foe. At the end of the game, the player who has scored the most Victory points has won the game. If the players have the same number of Victory points, the game ends in a draw.

Primary Objectives

Death Toll: At the end of the game, each side gains 1 Victory point for each unit they have destroyed or that is Falling Back at the end of the game.

Blood Feud: After setting up and deploying the armies, but before play begins, each player should secretly note down a particular unit type from the list below. At the end of the game, the player's Blood Feud target is revealed. Each player gains an additional Victory point for each unit of the type they have chosen which has either been destroyed or is Falling Back at the end of the game.

Blood Feud Targets

- Infantry (all types except Independent Characters): +1 Victory point
- Independent Characters: +2 Victory points
- Vehicles with the Tank type: +1 Victory point
- Super-heavy Vehicles: +2 Victory points
- Vehicles with the Walker type: +1 Victory point
- Vehicles with the Super-heavy Walker type: +2 Victory points
- Vehicles with the Flyer or Super-heavy Flyer type: +2 Victory points
- Monstrous Creatures and Gargantuan Monstrous Creatures: +2 Victory points
- Bikes, Jetbikes and Skimmers: +1 Victory point

Secondary Objectives

Slay the Warlord: If a side destroyed the enemy Warlord, they gain an extra Victory point.*

**Note that this is in addition to any points gained via Blood Feud, etc.*

Last Man Standing: The side with the greatest number of surviving units at the end of the game gains an extra Victory point.

Mission Special Rules

- Reserves (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)
- Night Fighting (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)

Mission 2 – Onslaught

"Victory is won by the precise application of superior force at the point of maximum vulnerability. All else —deft manoeuvre, honour, glory, skill-at-arms— all are worthless trivia in comparison, no matter what pretty lies my brothers may spout to the contrary."

Perturabo, Primarch of the Iron Warriors

The Armies

Choose the armies using the Battles in the Age of Darkness rules and Force Organisation charts.

Setting up the Game

- Determine the deployment map.
- Set up terrain for the battlefield.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.

Deployment

- Roll off. The winner may choose to deploy first or second.
- The player who deploys first selects their deployment zone and then deploys first using the Staged Deployment special rule (see Mission Special Rules), followed by the second player.
- Rules for deploying into fortifications, Infiltrators, Scouts and Transport vehicles, etc, are as found in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.
- After both sides have deployed, including Infiltrators and after Scout redeployments have been made, each player places a single objective marker in their opponent's deployment zone and further than 6" away from any table edge, with the player that deployed first placing the first objective.

First Turn

The player who deployed first also has the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Game Length

This mission lasts for six turns.

Victory Conditions

The Onslaught mission represents an attempt to break the enemy line through shock and brute force. At the end of the game, the player who has scored the most Victory points has won the game. If the players have the same number of Victory points, the game ends in a draw.

Primary Objectives

Onslaught Attack: Any enemy unit destroyed in the first Game Turn is worth 1 Victory point.

Seize the Tactical Objectives: If a player has control of the tactical objective in their opponent's deployment zone at the end of the game, that player gains 5 Victory points.

Secondary Objectives

Slay the Warlord: If a side destroyed the enemy Warlord, they gain an extra Victory point.

Attrition: The army which has destroyed the highest number of enemy units at the end of the game gains an additional Victory point.

Mission Special Rules

- Reserves (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)
- Night Fighting (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)
- Staged Deployment

Staged Deployment

Rather than deploy their entire army at once, the player who deploys first deploys a single unit on to the table, then their opponent deploys a unit, in the staged deployment order shown below.

After this has been done, the two players continue to alternate deployment of their units until they have both fully deployed (except any units held in Reserve, etc).

It is entirely possible that one side will run out of units to deploy before the other. If this is the case, then the player with the larger number of units may deploy their remainder as they wish after their opponent has run out.

Staged Deployment Order

1st	Fortifications
2nd	Lords of War units
3rd	Heavy Support units
4th	Troops units
5th	Elites units
6th	Headquarters units
7th	Fast Attack units

Mission 3 – Shatter Strike

"It is not enough to take from an enemy their life—rather take from them also their places of safety, their allies, their homes and their loved ones. Crush all those in their care, lay their chattels to waste and then drive them alone and naked into the darkness. Take everything they have and burn it for the mere pleasure of seeing the ash crackle between your fingers, and call it nothing more than a beginning."

Jaghatai Khan

The Armies

Choose the armies using the Battles in the Age of Darkness rules and Force Organisation charts.

Setting up the Game

- Determine the deployment map.
- Set up terrain for the battlefield.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.

Deployment

- Roll off. The winner may choose to deploy first or second.
- The player who deploys first selects their deployment zone and then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- The player who deploys second then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- Rules for deploying into fortifications, Infiltrators, Scouts and Transport vehicles, etc, are as found in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

First Turn

The player who deployed first also has the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Game Length

After five turns, roll a D6. On the roll of a 4+, a sixth and final turn is played.

Victory Conditions

The victory conditions of this mission are tied to taking ground from the enemy. At the end of the game, the player who has scored the most Victory points has won the game. If the players have the same number of Victory points, the game ends in a draw.

Primary Objectives

Shatter Strike: At the end of the game, each player scores 2 Victory points for every scoring unit in their opponent's deployment zone, and 1 Victory point for every denial unit in their opponent's deployment zone.

Secondary Objectives

Slay the Warlord: If a side destroyed the enemy Warlord, they gain an extra Victory point.

Attrition: The army which has destroyed the highest number of enemy units at the end of the game gains an additional Victory point.

Mission Special Rules

- Reserves (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)
- Night Fighting (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)
- The Price of Failure (If Lords of War units are used)

Mission 4 – Dominion

"And where my hand shall strike, the foes of Mankind shall be laid waste; so shall I be the hammer of the Emperor, and I shall never tire."
Atrbt. Ferrus Manus before the Battle of Ke'ar Madoc

The Armies

Choose the armies using the Battles in the Age of Darkness rules and Force Organisation charts.

Setting up the Game

- Determine the deployment map.
- Set up terrain for the battlefield.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.
- Place mission objectives in accordance with the Mission Special Rules section.

Deployment

- Roll off. The winner may choose to deploy first or second.
- The player who deploys first selects their deployment zone and then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- The player who is deploying second then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- Rules for deploying into fortifications, Infiltrators, Scouts and Transport vehicles, etc, are as found in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

First Turn

The player who deployed first also has the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Game Length

After five turns, roll a D6. On the roll of a 4+, a sixth and final turn is played.

Victory Conditions

The victory conditions of this mission are achieved by first taking objectives in the heart of the war zone and then retaining control of them through the course of the battle. At the end of the game, the player who has scored the most Victory points has won the game. If the players have the same number of Victory points, the game ends in a draw.

Primary Objectives

Dominion Objectives: At the start of each player's turn, they gain 1 Victory point for each tactical objective they control. These Victory points are kept even if that objective is lost later in the game, and contribute to the player's Victory points total at the end of the game.

Secondary Objectives

Slay the Warlord*: If a side destroyed the enemy Warlord, they gain D3 extra Victory points.

Attrition*: The army which has destroyed the highest number of enemy units at the end of the game gains D3 additional Victory points.

**Note that the rewards for these secondary objectives are higher than normal.*

Mission Special Rules

- Reserves
  (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)
- Night Fighting
  (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)
- The Price of Failure
  (if Lords of War units are used)
- Dominion Objectives

Dominion Objectives

This mission uses five objective markers. During the game's set up, but before deployment has been determined, the players take turns in placing one objective each in the area of the table outside of the players' deployment zones until all of the objectives have been placed. These markers may not be placed within 6" of each other or a table edge.

Alternative – Objective Terrain

Rather than use objective markers, if both sides agree, individual pieces of terrain may instead be specified as the mission's objectives. It is suggested in this case that three pieces of objective terrain be used, which must be fully located outside of either player's deployment zones and suitably marked to identify them. Each should be distinct and easily identifiable, and have a suggested total size of no less than 6" on each side and no more than 12" on each side, and be substantial enough to provide cover to infantry models inside them. Suitable types of terrain include ruins, large shell craters, redoubts, derelict buildings, vehicle wrecks, etc.

In order to claim or deny a piece of objective terrain, a valid unit must have at least one model within 6" of the centre of the terrain's ground level. A unit may never claim or deny more than a single piece of objective terrain at once.

Mission 5 – Tide of Carnage

"All I wish to hear from your imperfect world is the silence of its dead."

Lord Commander Lothreal Sabine of the Emperor's Children,
Communiqué to the Judicator of Nalislarr

The Armies

Choose the armies using the Battles in the Age of Darkness rules and Force Organisation charts.

Setting up the Game

- Determine the deployment map.
- Set up terrain for the battlefield.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.

Deployment

- Roll off. The winner may choose to deploy first or second.
- The player who deploys first selects their deployment zone and then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- The player who is deploying second then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- Rules for deploying into fortifications, Infiltrators, Scouts and Transport vehicles, etc, are as found in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

First Turn

The player who deployed first also has the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Game Length

This mission lasts for five turns.

Victory Conditions

The victory conditions of this mission are achieved by forcing the enemy back from the battlefield. At the end of the game, the player who has scored the most Victory points has won the game. If the players have the same number of Victory points, the game ends in a draw.

Primary Objectives

Tide of Carnage: Each sector of the battlefield is worth a certain amount of Victory points for the side who controls it. In order to claim a sector, a side must have one or more scoring units in the sector and the enemy must have no scoring units left in that sector.

The sectors of the battlefield are defined as follows:

- Player's own deployment zone: 3 Victory points
- No Man's Land (the area of the battlefield which is not covered by either deployment zone): 5 Victory points
- Opposing player's deployment zone: 7 Victory points

Secondary Objectives

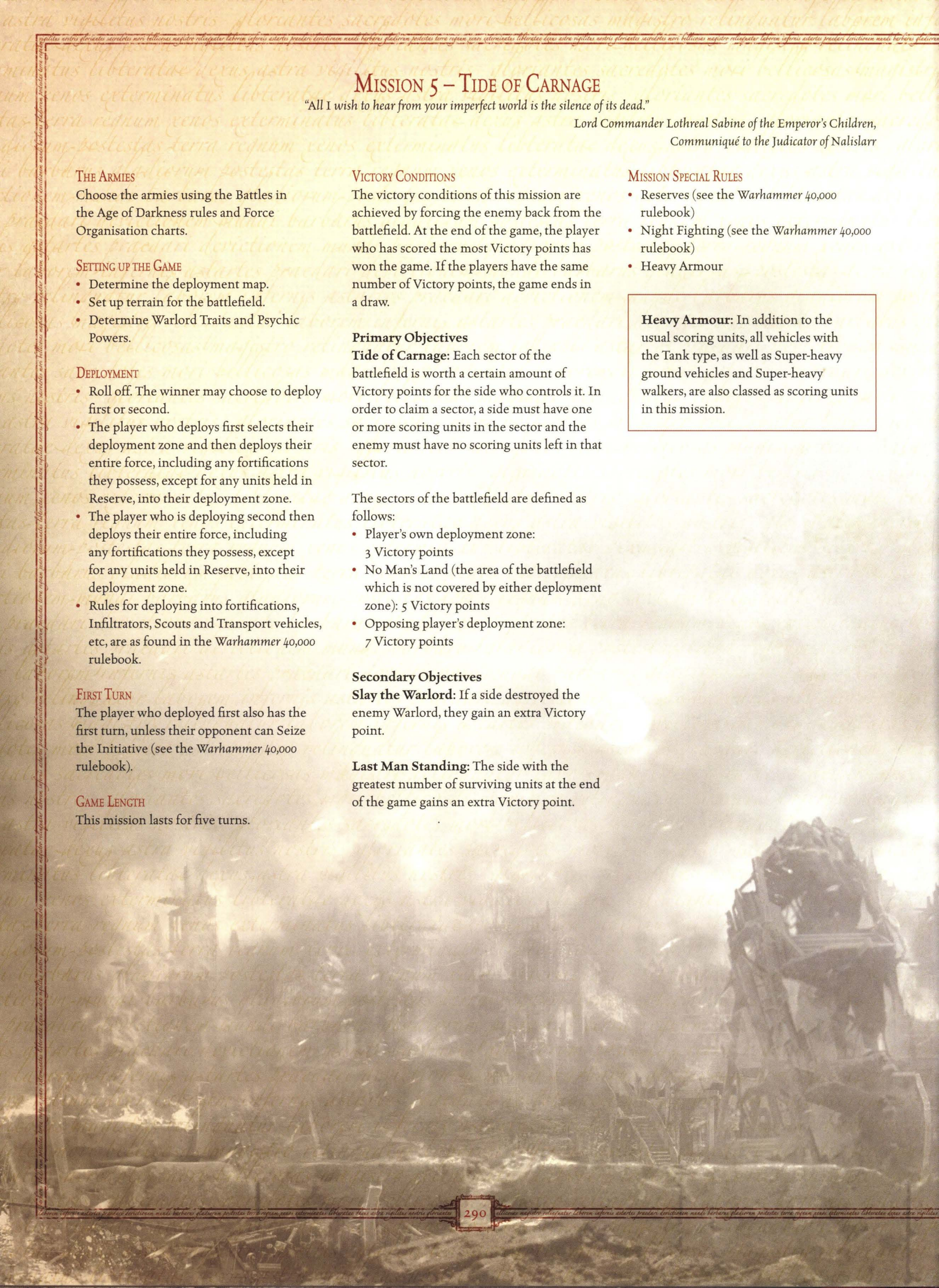
Slay the Warlord: If a side destroyed the enemy Warlord, they gain an extra Victory point.

Last Man Standing: The side with the greatest number of surviving units at the end of the game gains an extra Victory point.

Mission Special Rules

- Reserves (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)
- Night Fighting (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)
- Heavy Armour

Heavy Armour: In addition to the usual scoring units, all vehicles with the Tank type, as well as Super-heavy ground vehicles and Super-heavy walkers, are also classed as scoring units in this mission.



Mission 6 – War of Lies

"In any battle, great or small, the most insignificant of terrain and the most worthless of ground can for minutes, or perhaps hours, become so valuable that the blood of heroes and the wealth of an army's supply does not outweigh it. The true general knows when such a price is worth spending, and when the butcher's bill is sheer folly to pay."

Roboute Guilliman, ext. 'On War'

The Armies

Choose the armies using the Battles in the Age of Darkness rules and Force Organisation charts.

Setting up the Game

- Determine the deployment map.
- Set up terrain for the battlefield.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.
- A single objective marker is placed as close to the centre of the battlefield as possible. Each player then takes turn placing two objective markers each elsewhere on the battlefield, no closer than 12" from another objective marker, and no closer than 6" from any table edge.

Deployment

- Roll off. The winner may choose to deploy first or second.
- The player who deploys first selects their deployment zone and then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- The player who is deploying second then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- Rules for deploying into fortifications, Infiltrators, Scouts and Transport vehicles, etc, are as found in the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook.

First Turn

The player who deployed first also has the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook).

Game Length

This mission lasts for six turns.

Victory Conditions

The victory conditions of this mission reflect the anarchy and uncertainty of civil war, where goals desperately fought over and bled for may ultimately prove worthless. At the end of the game, the player who has scored the most Victory points has won the game. If the players have the same number of Victory points, the game ends in a draw.

Primary Objectives

Death Toll: At the end of the game, each side gains 1 Victory point for each unit they have destroyed or that is Falling Back at the end of the game.

War of Lies: At the end of the game, roll a D6 on the following table to determine the worth —if any— of each objective controlled by the player at the end of game. Roll once for each objective.

D6	Result
1	No Victory points
2-3	1 Victory point
4	2 Victory points
5	3 Victory points
6	Minus D3 Victory points

Secondary Objectives

Slay the Warlord: If a side destroyed the enemy Warlord, they gain an extra Victory point.

Mission Special Rules

- Reserves (see the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook)

Vakuran, Leviathan Pattern Siege Dreadnought

Legiones Astartes Night Lords, Xorthorn Aftermath

A veteran of the later Unification Wars, Ancient-Reductus Vakuran fell in battle against a mighty Over-wyrd of the Hambro-Cuth. Vakuran would be sealed within the Leviathan pattern Siege Dreadnought depicted in this pict-image, a machine captured by the Night Lords at Xorthorn VII, the still-living body of its Ultramarines internee ripped from its sarcophagus and cast to the bloody ground.

Vakuran in his Leviathan form is known to have participated in a dozen campaigns fought across the coreward marches of the Ultima Segmentum and Segmentum Tempestus, in each case leading the Traitor Night Lords forces in direct assaults against heavily defended Loyalist holdfasts. In each instance the Dreadnought's attack was more direct, brutal and crude, leading observers to suspect that his sanity had been stretched to breaking point by the strain of operating the highly taxing and demanding Leviathan Dreadnought.

AFTERWORD

The Horus Heresy Book Six – Retribution continues the unfolding saga of the Horus Heresy. As the fires of total war consume entire worlds and whole Legions clash, away from the front lines the Knights-Errant are abroad too, penetrating the warp storms that afflict the entire galaxy as they carry out a mission bestowed upon them by the very highest authority on distant Terra. The Shattered Legions pursue bloody vengeance against the hated Traitors, who in turn seek to hunt the Loyalist survivors down no matter where they might seek refuge. Blackshields —orphaned or outcast Legiones Astartes who have renounced their Legions and obscured their heraldry— harbour their own objectives, alone in the darkness, sometimes aligned with the Traitor cause, sometimes the Loyalist, but just as often for their own unknowable ends.

This book explores the unseen Shadow Wars that raged across the entire galaxy as Legiones Astartes betrayed at Isstvan, Calth, Phall and other places mounted bitter campaigns against those who had betrayed them. Across the void, the hunted turned upon the hunters, determined that if death was to be their fate, their betrayers would share it. This tale is told across five chapters, describing five very different Shadow Wars of the Age of Darkness. Also included are a detailed campaign system and a set of special Shadow Wars missions, enabling players to undertake their own series of linked battles fought between the types of forces explored throughout the book.

Retribution contains a myriad of new rules, including those for combining Space Marines of several different Legions into a mixed Shattered Legion force, and in order to make full use of this, new Legiones Astartes rules are provided for the Dark Angels, Blood Angels and White Scars. Rules are also included for Blackshields and Knights-Errant, as well as numerous new Rites of War. In addition to this plethora of rules, *Retribution* provides an extensive Appendices section, which includes unit entries for the Legion Mastodon Heavy Assault Transport and the Leviathan pattern Siege Dreadnought.

As always, we extend our thanks to the legions of Horus Heresy gamers and collectors who have expressed their appreciation and feedback, and for sharing our ongoing exploration of the age of total war that is the Horus Heresy.

The Forge World Studio

A Forge World supplement for

WARHAMMER 40,000

The Horus Heresy Book Six – Retribution is a supplement for Warhammer 40,000 dealing with war and battle in the dark age of the Horus Heresy, when the fledgling Imperium of Mankind was torn apart by bloody civil war and treachery. This book, lavishly illustrated in full colour, contains extensive background information on the bitter shadow wars fought throughout the Age of Darkness. This book also contains rules for fielding the vengeful Shattered Legions, as well as the embittered Blackshields and the mysterious Knights-Errant. It also presents special rules for the Blood Angels, Dark Angels and White Scars Legions, and new Rites of War for use by any Legiones Astartes force. Included is an extensive campaign system allowing players to recreate the savage wars of retribution fought the length and breadth of the sundered Imperium throughout the dark years of the Age of Darkness.

The Horus Heresy Book Six – Retribution is a complete expansion for the Warhammer 40,000 game – it requires the *Warhammer 40,000* rulebook, the *Legiones Astartes Crusade Army List* and *Mechanicum Taghmata Army List* books to use its contents.

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